# THE BLESSEDNESSE OF THE RIGHTEOUS

Discourſed from *Pſal.* 17, 15.

By *John Howe* M. A.

*When he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is,* 1 John 3. 2.

Ἀλλὰ τὰ κακὰ ἀ ἀναίλυτ ἐν θεοῖς ἰδρύδ· τῶν δὲ θνητῶν φύσιν, καὶ τόνδε τὸν τόπον περιπολεῖ ἐξ ἀνάγκης. Διὸ καὶ πειρᾶδ χρὴ ἐνθένδε ἐκεῖσε φεύγειν ὅτι τάχιστα. Φυγὴ δὲ ὁμοίωσις θεῷ κατὰ τὸ δυνατόν· ὁμοίωσις δὲ, δίκαιον, καὶ ὅσιον μετὰ φρονήσεως γενέδαι. *Plat. in Theæteti.*

LODON,

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# To the Reader.

*I Am not at all ſolicitous, that the World ſhould know the Hiſtory of the conception of this Treatiſe. If there be any thing that ſhall recompence the pains of ſuch as may think fit to give themſelves the trouble of peruſing it, in the work it ſelf; I ſhould yet think it too much an under-valuing of them, if I did reckon the minuter circumſtances relating thereto, fit matter for their entertainment.*

*Nor am I more concern'd to have it known what were the inducements to the publication of it. Earneſt proteſtations and remonſtrances of our good intentions in ſuch undertakings, as they leave men ſtill at liberty to believe, or doubt, at their pleaſure, ſo they gain us little if they be believed. It is no eaſie matter to carry one, even, conſtant tenour of Spirit, through a work of time. Nor is it more eaſie to paſſe a ſetled, invariable judgement, concerning ſo variable a ſubject: when an heart that may ſeem wholly framed and ſet for God this hour; ſhall look ſo quite like another thing the next: and change figures and poſtures almoſt as often as it doth thoughts.*

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*And if a man should be mistaken in judging himself, it would little mend the matter, to have deceived others also into a good opinion of him.*

*But if he can approve himself to God in the simplicity of an honest and undeceived heart; The peace that ensues, is a secret between God and him.* They are Theatre enough to one another (*as he said to his friend.*) *'Tis an incloſed pleaſure. A joy which the ſtranger cannot intermiddle with.* Senec.

*'Tis therefore any mans concernment, herein rather to ſatisfie himſelf, then the world. And the world rather to underſtand the deſign of the work then the Author: and whither it tends, rather then whereto he meant it.*

*And 'tis obvious enough to what good purpoſes diſcourſes of this nature may ſerve. This is, in the deſign of it, wholly practical; Hath little or nothing to do with diſputation. If there be any whoſe buſineſs it is to promote a private, divided intereſt; or who place the ſum of their Religion in an inconſiderable, and doubtful opinion: It doth not unhallow their altars, nor offer any to affront their idol. It intends no quarrel to any contending, angry party. But deals upon things in the ſubſtance whereof, Chriſtians are at a profeſſed agreement. And hath therefore the greater probability of doing good to ſome, without the offence of any.* 'T

*'Tis indeed equally matter of complaint and wonder, that men can find so much leasure to direct from such things, wherein there is so much both of importance and pleasure unto, what one would think should have little of temptation or allurement in it, contentions jangling. It might rather be thought, its visible fruits and tendencies should render it the most dreadful thing to every serious beholder. What Tragedies hath it wrought in the Christian Church! Into how weak and languishing a condition hath it brought the Religion of professed Christians? Hence have risen the intemperate preternatural heats and angers that have spent its strength and spirits; and make it look with so Meagre and Pale a face. We have had a greater mind to dispute then live; and to contend about what we know not, then to practice the far greater things we know: and which more directly tend to nourish and maintain the Divine Life. The Authour of that ingenious sentence * (whoever he were) hath fitly exprest what is the noisome product of the* itch of disputing. *It hath begot the ulcerous tumors; which, besides their own offencive soreness, drain the body, and turn what should nourish that, into nutriment to themselves. And it effects are not more grievous, then the pleasures which it affects and pursues are uncouth and unnatural.*

Pruritus disputandi scobies Ecclesia.

* Ut ulcera quædam nocituras manus apetunt & tactu gaudent & tædam corporum scabiem delectat quicquid exasperat: Non aliter dixerim his mentibus in quas voluptates velut mala ulcera erupêrunt, voluptati esse laborem, vexationemq; Sen. de tranquillitate animi.

* The rough touch of an ungentle hand. That onely pleases which exasperates (*as the moralist aptly expresses some like disaffection of diseased minds.*) Toyl and vexation is their only delight *what to a sound spirit would be a pain, is to these a pleasure.*

*Which is, indeed, the triumph of the disease, that it addes unto torment, reproach, and mockery, and imposes upon men by so ridiculous a delusion (while they are made to take pleasure in punishing themselves) that even the most sober can scarce look on in a fitter posture, then with a compassionate smile. All which were yet somewhat more tollerable if that imagined vanishing pleasure were not the whole of their gain: or if it were to be hoped that so great a present real pain and smart, should be recompensed with as real a consequent fruit and advantage. But we know, that generally, by how much any thing is more disputable, the lesse it is necessary or conducible to the Christian life. God hath graciously provided, that what we are to live by should not cost us so dear. And possibly as there is lesse occasion of disputing about the more momentous things of Religion, so there may be somewhat more of modesty, and awe in reference to what is so confessedly venerable and sacred (though too many are over-bold even here also) then so foolishly to trifle with such*

*such things. Therefore more commonly, where that humour prevails, men divert from those plainer things, with some slighter and superficial reverence to them, but* more heartily, *esteeming them insipid and jejune, because they have less in them to gratifie that appetite; And betake themselves to such things about which they may more plausibly contend; and then what pitiful trifles oftentimes take up their time and thoughts. Questions and Problems of like weighty importance (very often) with those "which, the abovenamed "Authour tells us, this disease among the "Greeks prompted them to trouble themselves "about, as* what number of Rowers Ulisses "had? Which was written first the Iliad "or the Odysses? &c. *So that (as he saith) "they spent their lives* very operously doing "nothing. *Their conceits being such that if "they kept them to themselves, they could "yield them no fruit: and if they published "them to others, they should not seem thereby the more* learned, *but the more* troublesome, (*To this purpose he truely speaks.*) *And is it not to be resented that men should sell away the solid strength and vitals joy which a serious Soul would find in substantial Religion for such toyes! Yea and not only famish themselves but trouble the world, and imbroil the Church with their impertinencies!*

Sen de Brev. vit.

*If a man be drawn forth to defend an important truth against an injurious assault, it were treacherous self-love to purchase his own peace by declining it. Or if he did sometimes turne his thoughts to some of our petite questions, that with many are so hotly agitated, for recreation sake, or to try his wit, and exercise his reason without stirring his passions, to the disturbance of others or himself; here an innocent divertisement, and the best purpose that things of that nature are capable of serving. But when contention becomes a mans element, and he cannot live out of that fire, strains his wit, and racks his invention to find matter of quarrel; is resolved, nothing said or done by others shall please him, onely because he means to please him in dissenting. Disputes onely that he may dispute, and loves dissension for it self. This is the unnatural humour that hath so unspeakably troubled the Church, and despised Religion, and filled mens Souls with wind and vanity. Yea with fire and fury. This hath made Christians gladiaters, and the Christian World a clamorous Theater, while men have equally affected to contend: and to make ostentation of their ability so to do.*

*And surely as it is highly pleasurable to retire ones self, so it is charitable to call aside*

*other*

*others out of this noise and throng, to consider silently and feed upon the known and agree'd things of our Religion; which immediately lead to both the duties and delights of it.*

*Among which there are none more evident and undoubted, none lesse intangled with controversie, none more profitable and pleasant then the* future blessednes of the righteous *which this discourse Treats of. The last end is a matter to little disputable, that 'tis commonly thought (which is elsewhere more distinctly spoken to) not to be the object of election, and so not of deliberation consequently, but of simple intention onely, because men are supposed to be generally agree'd as touching that. And the knowledge and intention of it is apparently the very soul of Religion; animates, direct, enlivens, and sweetens the whole thereof. Without which Religion were the vainest irrational and most unsavoury thing in the World.*

*And because the more clearly this our last end is understood, the more powerfully and sweetly it attracts and mrves the Soul, this Treatise endeavours to give as plain and positive a state and notion of it as the Text insisted on, compared with other Scriptures would afford to so weak an eye.*

*And*

*And because men are so apt to abuse themselves with the vain and self-contradicting hopes of attaining this end without ever having their spirits framed to it, or walking in the way that leads thereto, as if they could come to Heaven by chance, or without any design or care of theirs. The proportion is indeavoured to be shewn between that* Divine likeness *in the vision and participation whereof this Blessedness consists, and the* Righteousness *that disposes and leads to it. Which may it be monitory to the ungodly and profane, who hate and scorn the likeness of God wherever they behold it. And let me tell such from (better-instructed) Pagans,* "That "there is nothing more like or more accept- "able to God, then a man that is in the "temper of his Soul truly good who excells o- "ther men, as he is himself excelled (pardon "his Hyperbole) by the immortal God.

"That between God and good men, there "is a friendship, by means of vertue; a "friendship? yea a kindred, a likeness, in- "asmuch truly as the good man differs from "God but in time (here sprinkle a grain or "two) being his Disciple, Imitatour, and "very of-spring.

*Nihil est Deo similius aut gratius quam vir animo perfectè bonus, &c. Apul. de Deo Socratis.

*Inter bonos viros ac Deum, amicitia est conciliante virtute, amicitiam dico? etiam necessitud, & similitudo, &c. Sen. de prov.

That

"That * God is full of indignation against "such as reproach one that is alike to him, or "that praise one that is contrarily affected (or "unlike) but such is the good man (i.e. he is "one like) God, A good man (as it shortly after "follows) is the holiest thing in the World, "and a wicked man the most polluted thing.

* Νεμεσᾶ γὰρ ὁ θεὸς ὅταν τις ἑαυτὸν ἰσοῖ ἑαυτῷ ὅμοιον. ὅ ἐστι καὶ τὸν ταὐτὸ ἐναντίως ἔχοντα. τὸν δ' ὅτι ὁ ἀγαθὸς. ---παάλιον ἱερατεῖον τὸν ἀνδρωπος ἀγαθὸς, ὁ μιαρώτατον ὁ πονηρὸς--- *Plato in Minoe.*

*And let me warn such haters of holiness, and holy men in the words of this Authours immediately subjoyned.* "And this I say for "this cause, that thou being but a man, "the son of a man, no more offend in speak- "ing against an Hero; One who is a Son of "God.

Τούτου δ' ἕνεκα φράσω ἵνα μὴ ἄνδρωπος ὢν ἀνδρώπου, μὴ ἥρω Διὸς υἱὸν λόγῳ ἐξαμαρτάνῃς.

*Me thinks men should be ashamed to pro fesse the belief of a life to come, while they cannot behold without indignation, nor men- tion but with derision, that holiness without which it can never be attained, and which is indeed the seed and principle of the thing it self.*

*But such are not likely much to trouble themselves with this discourse. There's little in it indeed of Art, or Ornament to invite or gratifie such as the Subject it self invites not. And nothing at all but what was appre- hended might be some way useful. The af- fectation*

*fectation of garniſhing a margent with the names of Authours, I have ever thought a vain pedantry yet have not declined the occaſional uſe of a few that occurred. He that writes to the World muſt reckon himſelf debter to the wiſe and unwiſe. If what is done ſhall be found with any to have promoted its proper end. His praiſes to God ſhall follow it (as his prayers do that it may) who profeſſes himſelf.*

A Well willer to the Souls
of men. *J. H.*

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*Chriſtian*

# Christian Reader.

YOu whose hearts are set on Heaven, who are dayly laying up a treasure there, here is a welcome messenger, to tell you more than perhaps you have well considered, of the nature of your future Blessedness, and to illustrate the Map of the Land of promise, and to bring you another cluster of its grapes: Here is a useful help to make you know that Holiness doth participate of Glory, and that Heaven is at least Virtually in the Seed of Grace; Though this life be properly called a life of Faith, as contradistinct from the intuition and fruition hereafter, as well as from the lower life of sence; yet is it a great truth, and not sufficiently considered and improved, that we have here more than Faith, to acquaint us with the Blessedness expected: Between Faith and Glory, there is the Spirit of Holiness, the love of God, the heavenly desires, which are kindled by Faith and are those branches on which the happy flower and fruit must grow: They are the name and mark of God upon us: They are our Earnest, our Pledg, and the first fruits; And is not this more than a word of promise only? Therefore though all Christians must live by Faith, marvell not that I tell you, that you may, you must have more than Faith. Is not a Pledge, and Earnest, a first Fruits more? Therefore have Christians, not only a Spirit to evidence their Title, but also some foretast of Heaven it-

self:

*self*: *for* Faith *in* Christ *is to recover us* to God *and so much as we have of God, so much of fruition. And so much as Faith hath kindled in you of* [illegible] *love of God, so much foretaste you have of Heaven: for you are deceived if you think that any* [illegible] *Notion speaketh more to you of* Heaven *and of* [illegible] Ultimate end, *than* THE LOVE OF GOD. *And though no unsound ill-grounded Faith,* [illegible] *serve to cause this sacred Love, yet when it is caused, it over-tops this cause, and he that perceiveth the operations of a strong effectual Love hath an acquaintance with God and Heaven which is above that of* believing: Faith seeth *the Face but* Love *is the* tasting *of it. And therefore it is that the Holiest souls sticks closest unto God, because (though their reasoning faculty may be defective) they know him by the highest and most Tenacious kind of knowledge, which this World affordeth, (as I have lately shewed elsewhere; Here you have described to you, the true* witness *of the Spirit; Not that of supposed* Internal Voice, *which they are usually, most taken up with, who have the smallest knowledge, and Faith, and Love, and the greatest self esteem or spiritual pride, with the strongest phantasies and passions, But the objective and the sealing Testimony, the Divine Nature, the renewed Image of God, whose Children are known by being* like *to their Heavenly Father, even by being Holy as he is Holy. This is the Spirit of Adoption, by which we are inclined, by* Holy Love to God, *and confidence in him, to cry* Abba Father, *and to flie unto him: The Spirit of* Sanctification *is* thereby *in us the Spirit of* Adoption: *For both signifie but the giving us that*

Love

*Love to God, which is the filial* nature, *and our* Fathers Image.

*And this Treatise doth happily direct thee, to* that faithful beholding God in Righteousness, which must here begin this blessed *Assimilation, which full* Intuition will for ever perfect.

*It is a happy sign that God is about to repair our* Ruins and divisions, *when he stirreth up his ser-* vants to speak so much of Heaven, *and to call* in the minds of impatient complainers, *and con-* tentious censurers, *and ignorant self conceited di-* viders, *and of worldly, unskilful, and unmerciful* Rulers, *to look to that state where all the godly shall* be one; *and to turn those thoughts to the furtherance* of *Holiness, to provoke one another to Love and to* good works, *which too many lay out upon their hay* and *stubble, And to call men from* judging and *despising each other (and worse then both those)* to *put their Meats, and Drinks, and Dayes, to study* Righteousness, *and Peace, and Joy in the Holy Ghost.* For *he that in these things serveth Christ (in which* the *Kingdom doth consist) is acceptable to God, and* approved *of men (that are wise and good.) Let us* therefore *follow after the things which make for* Peace, *and things wherewith one may edifie ano-* ther; *whilest the contentions for meat will destroy* the *work of God.* Rom. 14. 17, 18, 19, 20. *The* Union *between Peace and Holiness is so strict that he* that *truly promoteth one, promoteth both.* Heb. 12. 14. Jam. 3. 17. *The true way of our Union is ex-* cellently *described,* Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, &c.

*If any plain unlearned Readers, shall blame the* obscureness *of the Stile, they must remember that* those

*those persons have not the least need to hear of Ha*
*ven, and to be drawn up from the vanities of ear*
*who cannot digest a looser stile.*

*As God hath endued the worthy Authour wit*
*more then ordinary measure of judiciousness, e*
*soundness and accurateness of understanding, w*
*seriousness, spirituality, and a heavenly mind*
*we have for our common benefit, the effects of*
*these happy qualifications, in this judicious, h*
*venly discourse. And if my recommendations m*
*in any measure, further your acceptance, i*
*provement and practising of so edifying a Treat*
*it will answer the ends of him who waiteth with*
*in hope for the same Salvation.*

Rich. Baxter.

Acton *May* 30.
1698

# THE BLESSEDNESSE OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

## *A Proemial Discourse to the intended Subject.*

THe continual mixture of Good, and Evil, in this present state of things; with its uncertain fluctuations, and subjection to perpetual changes; do naturally prompt a considering mind to the belief and hope of *another*; that may be both more perfect, and more permanent. For certainly it could never be a design adequate (or any way agreeable) to the Divine Wisdom and goodness, that the blessed God should raise such a thing, as this lower Creation out of nothing; Only to give

himself the temporary pleasure of beholding (the alternate Joys and Sorrows of the best part thereof) his reasonable creature seated in it. Nor a delight at all proportionable to an eternal happy being; when he hath connaturalliz'd such a creature to this sensible world; onely to take notice how variously the passions he hath planted in him may be mov'd and stir'd by this variety of occasions, which he shal thence be presented with. And what suddain, and contrary impressions may be made upon his easie passive senses, by the interchanged strokes and touches of contrary objects. How quickly he can raise him into a transport of high contentment, and pleasure; and then how soon he can again reduce him to a very Paroxism of anguish and despair. It would discover us to have very vile and low thoughts of God, if we did not judge it altogether unanswerable to his perfections, to design no further thing in creating this world, and placing such a creature as man in it; then onely to please himself for a while with such a spectacle, and then at last clear the Stage, and shut up all again, in an eternal Silent darkness. If we could suppose a *man* furnished with such *power*, he would surely adde little to the reputation of his being *wise*, or *good* beyond other *men*, by a design so to use it.

Much less, can we think it worthy of God to *perpetuate* such a state of things as this; and continue a succession of such persons and actions, as we now behold in the world, through eternal generations; onely to perpetuate to himself the same pleasure, in the exercise of his immen-

mense power, upon created natures; over which he hath so infinite advantage.

And indeed nothing can be more unconceivable, then that the great Creatour and Authour of all things, should frame a Creature of so vast comprehension, as the Spirit of man, put into it a capacity of knowing, and conversing with himself; give it some prospect of his own glory and blessedness, raise thereby in many, boundless unsatisfied desires after him, and an unexpressible pleasure in the preconceived hope of being received into the communion of that glory and blessedness; and yet defeat and blast so great an expectation by the unsuspected reducement of the very subject of it again to nothing. Yea, and that he should deal herein (as in that case he must) the most hardly with the best; And that such souls, whose meer love and devotedness to him, had made them abandon the pleasures of this life, and run thorough whatsoever difficulties for his sake, should fare worse then the very worst, were, beyond all the rest, most utterly unimaginable; and a thought which Pagan-reason hath not known how to digest or entertain. "If (saith one, and he speaks the sense of "many another, as well as his own) with the "dissolution of our bodies, the essence of the "Souls, whatsoever that be, should be dissol-"ved too, and for ever cease to be any thing; "I know not how I can account them blessed, "that never having enjoyed any good, as the "reward of their vertue, have even perished "for vertue its self.

Εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἀπο-
μαίσεις σύν-
μασι θνητοῖς καὶ τὸ
σῶμα λυθὲν
τῆς ψυχῆς,
ὅτι δὲ πολὺ
κρεῖττον ἐκεῖνο
σωθήναι·
εἶεν, &c.
*Dionys. Halicar. Antiq. Rom. lib. 6.*

Where-

Wherefore it is consequent that this present state is only intended for trial to the spirits of men, in order to their attainment of a better state in a better world. That is, that inasmuch, as the infinitely wise and blessed God, had given being to such a creature, as man, in which both words (the material, and the immaterial) did meet; And who, in respect of his Earthly, and Spiritual natures, had in him somewhat suitable to each. And whereas this Creature had lost (with his interest) his very inclination to the Spiritual Objects, and enjoyments of the purer immaterial world (wherein alone his true blessedness could consist) suffered a vile depression of his Spirit unto this gross corporal world; and hereby brought himself under a necessity of being miserable; his nobler part having nothing now to satisfie it, but what it was become unsuitable and disaffected to.

His merciful Creatour, being intent upon his restitution, thought fit not to bring it about by a suddain and violent hand (as it were to catch him into Heaven against his will:) But to raise his Spirit into its just Dominion and Soveraignty in him, by such gradual Methods, as were most suitable to a rational, and intelligent nature. That is, to discover to him, that he had such a thing as Spirit about him; whence it was fall'n, how low it was sunk, to what state it was yet capable to be rais'd; and what he had design'd, and done for its happy recovery. And hence by the secret and powerful insinuations of his

own

own Light and Grace to awaken his drowsie slumbering reason, and incline his perverse, and wayward will, to the consideration and choice of such things, as that felicity consists in; which that better world can afford, and his better part enjoy.

And while he propounds such things to him, how reasonable and agreeable was it, that he should keep him sometime under a just probation (yea, how much was there in it, of a gracious and compassionate indulgence, often to renew the trial? whether he would yet bestir himself; and (having so great hopes before him, and such helps and aids afforded him, and ready to be afforded) apply, at last, his intellectual, and elective powers, to mind and close with so gracious overtures, in order to his own eternal advancement and blessedness.

Nor was it an unreasonable expectation, that he should do so. For, however the temporal good, and evil that may constantly affect his sensitive part and powers, be present and near; but the eternal misery, or blessedness of his Soul future, and remote: Yet inasmuch as he is capable of understanding, the vast disproportions of *time* and *eternity*; of a mortal flesh, and an immortal Spirit: How preposterous a course were it, and unworthy of a man; Yea, how dishonourable and reproachful to his Maker; should he prefer the momentary pleasures of narrow incapacious sence, to the everlasting enjoyments of an inlarged comprehensive Spirit? Or, for the avoiding the

pains and miseries of the former kind, incur those of the latter?

Whence also, the holy God doth not expect and require, onely that men should make that wiser choice; But doth most justly lay the weight of their eternal states upon their doing, or not doing so. And in that day when he shall *render to every one according to their works*, make this the Rule of his final judgment. To *allot to them, who by a patient continuance in well doing, seek for honour, glory, and immortality, eternal life.* To the rest, *indignation and wrath, tribulation, and anguish*, &c. *and that whether they be Jews, or Gentiles.*

Rom. 2. 6, 7, 8, 9.

Nor is it a new thing in the world, that some among the children of men, should in this comply with the righteous will of God, and so judge, and chuse for themselves, as he is pleased to direct and prescribe. 'Tis a course approved by the concurrent suffrage of all them, in all times and ages, into whose minds the true light hath shined, and whom God hath inspired with that wisdom, whereby he maketh wise to salvation.

That numerous Assembly of the perfected Spirits of the just, have agreed in this common resolution. And did in their several generations ere they had past this state of tryal, with an Heroique magnanimity trample this present World under their feet, and and aspire to the glory of the world to come. Relieving themselves against all the grievances they have *suffered* from such, whose

whose portion is in *this life*, with the alone hope and confidence of what they were to *enjoy* in *another*.

And hereof we have an eminent and illustrious instance in this Context, were the ground is laid of the following Discourse.

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*Psalm*

Fig. 1.

# THE BLESSEDNESSE OF THE *RIGHTEOUS.*

## Psal. 17. 15.

*As for me, I will behold thy Face in Righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness.*

## CHAP. I.

*A reflection upon some foregoing verses of the Psalm, by way of Introduction to the Text. A consideration of its somewhat various readings, and of its literal importance. A discussion of its real importance, so far as is necessary to the settling the subject of the following discourse.*

THe Title speaks the Psalm a Prayer of *David*. The matter of the Prayer is preservation from his enemies. Not to go over the whole Psalm, we have in the 13. and 14. verses, the sum of his desires, with a description of the Person he prayes to be delivered from; in which De-

scription every Character is an Argument to enforce his prayer.

*From the Wicked*] *q. d.* They are equally enemies to thee and me: not more opposite to *me* by their *cruelty*, then by their *wickedness* they are to *thee*. Vindicate, then at once, thy self and deliver me.

*Thy sword thy hand*] Thou canst as easily command and manage them, as a man may weild his sword, or move his hand. Will thou suffer thine own sword, thine own hand, to destroy thine own Servant.

*Men of the world, which have their portion in this life*] Time, and this lower World bound all their hopes, and fears. They have no serious believing apprehensions of any thing beyond this present life: therefore have nothing to withhold them, from the most injurious violence, if thou withhold them not. (*Men that believe not another world, are the ready Actors of any imaginable mischiefs, and Tragedies in this.*)

*Whose belly thou fillest*] *i. e.* Their sensual appetite. As oftentimes that term is used * *Whose thy hid Treasures*, viz. the riches, which either God is wont to hide in the bowels of the earth, or lock up in the repository of Providence, dispensing them at his own pleasure.

* Rom. 16 18. Phil. 3. 19.

*They are full of Children*] So it appears by that which followes, it ought to be read, and not according to that grosse * (but easie) mistake of some Transcribers of the Seventy.

* Gen. for ufs.

As if in all this he had pleaded thus; Lord thou hast abundantly indulged those men already

ready, what need they more? They have *themſelves*, from *thy* unregarded bounty, their own vaſt ſwoln deſires ſufficiently filled, enough for their own time; and when they can live no longer in their Perſons, they may in their Poſterity, and leave not Strangers, but their numerous Off-ſpring, their heirs. Is it not enough, that their *avarice* be gratified, except their *malice* be alſo? That they have whatſoever they can conceive deſirable for themſelves, unleſſe they may alſo infer what ever they can think miſchievous on me?

To this deſcription of his enemies, he *ex oppoſito*, ſubjoyns ſome account of himſelf, in this his cloſure of the Pſalm: *As for me* ] Here he is at his ſtatique point, and, after ſome appearing diſcompoſure, his ſpirit returns to a conſistency, in conſideration of his own more happy ſtate, which he oppoſes and prefers to theirs in the following reſpects.

That *they* were wicked, *he* righteous. *I will behold thy face* in righteouſneſſe. ] That *their* happineſſe was worldly, terrene, ſuch onely as did ſpring from the earth; *his* heavenly and divine, ſuch as ſhould reſult from *the Face and Image of God*. *Theirs* preſent, temporary, compaſt within this life; *His*, future, everlaſting, to be enjoyed, when he ſhould *awake*. *Theirs* partial, defective, ſuch as would but gratifie their beaſtial part, fill their bellies; *His* adequate, compleat (the ἱκανοσία τῆ ἀνθρώπε) Such as ſhould ſatisfie the *Man*: *I ſhall be ſatisfied*, &c.

The variety in rendring this Verſe (to be

אֲנִי בְצֶדֶק
אחזה פניך
אשבעה
בהקיץ
תמונתך

Sept. Ἐγὼ δὲ ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ ὀφθήσομαι τῷ προσώπῳ σου, πλησθήσομαι ἐν τῷ ὀφθῆναί με τὴν δόξαν σου.

The Vulgar Latine, *Ego autem in juſtitiâ apparebo conſpectui tuo, ſatiabor cum apparuerit gloria tua.* Exactly following the Seventy, as doth the *Ethiopique*. the *Chaldee* Paraphraſe diſagrees little, the *Arabique* leſſe, the *Syriack* miſtook it ſeem תמונת for אמונת and ſo read that word *faith* which we read *likeneſſe*.

*Hieronymus* (*juxta Hebr.*) reads the words exactly as we do. *Ego in juſtitiâ videbo faciem tuam, implebor, cum evigilavero, ſimilitudine tua.*

ſeen, by comparing, the Original and Tranſlations noted in the Margent, need not give us any trouble, the differences not being of great moment, nor our own reading liable to exception. The word תמונה, about which is the greateſt diverſity, hath the ſignificancy we here give it, in the ſecond Commandment and conſtantly elſewhere. And then, what more proper engliſh can this text be capable of, than it hath in our Bibles? Each word hath its true and genuine import; and the Syntax is ſufficiently regular, and grammatical of the whole.

Only as to the former, that uſual and obvious obſervation muſt here have place; that the ב prefixed to צדק, and which, with it, we read, [*in righteouſneſſe*] doth often ſignifie (among its various acceptations) *by* or *through*, and that, not onely as denoting inſtrumentality; but more at large, the place of any *medium* neceſſary to the attainment of the end it ſubſerves to, whence the ſame uſe of the Grek ἐν, that anſwers thereunto, is wont to go for an *Hebraiſm*.

And as to the latter, the onely thing liable to controverſie is; whether the Gerund בהקיץ is to be conſtrued with the *Perſon ſpeaking* [*when I awake*] or [*in my awaking*] or with the *thing*, the likeneſſe or image *ſpoken of* [*in the awaking of thine image*] or [*when thine image ſhall awake*] and I conceive, we need not diſcuſſe

it; but following our own Translation, leave the judgement of it to the ear it self, which (as *Elihu* tell us) trieth words.

In the mean time, the *real* importance of this Scripture, more calls for discussion than the *literal*; concerning which a threefold enquiry will be necessary, for the settling the subject of the following discourse:

1. What relation this [*righteousnesse*] must be understood to have to the Vision of Gods face, and the other consequent blessednesse.
2. What *time* or state [*awaking*] refers to.
3. What is intended by the [*likenesse of God.*]

To the first, It is onely necessary to say at present: that the already noted import of the preposition [*in*] being supposed most suitable to this text (as apparently it is) *Righteousnesse* must be lookt upon in reference to this *vision*, not as in an *idle*, or *meerely casuall concomitancy*; or as an unconcern'd circumstance, that hath nothing to do with the businesse spoken of; but as in a *close and intimate connexion* therewith; being 1. Antecedent. 2. Conducible. 3. Necessary thereto. Nor can I better expresse its place, and reference to it, *generally and in one word*, than in saying it *qualifies* for it, which how it doth will be more proper to consider hereafter. It may now suffice to say those words give us the *qualified subject of this blessednesse* [I in righteousnes.] A righteous person as such.

בצדק Seems best to be rendered here [*by or through righteousnes,*] as by the condition in which he may expect the return of Gods mercies here, or the eternal vision of him hereafter, &c. So the learned Dr. *Hammond*, *Annot. in loc.* quoting also *Castellio*, to the same purpose.

2. *To the Second*: Taking it for granted that none will understand this awaking as opposed to natural sleep in the *tralatitious or tropical sense*; it must be understood to intend either *some better state in this life* in comparison whereof the Psalmist reckons his present state but as a sleep; or the future state of blessedness in the other life. There have been some, who have understood it of the former, and thought the Psalmist to speak onely of an hoped freedom from his present temporal afflictions, but then, that which will be imply'd seems not so specious; that trouble and affliction, should be signified by the (necessarily) presupposed *sleep*, which sure doth more resemble *rest* than *trouble*.

I conceive it lesse exceptionable to refer [awaking] *to the blessed state of Saints after this life*. For;

That Saints, at that *time when* this was writ, had the knowledge of such a state (indeed a *Saint not believing a life to come*, is a perfect contradiction) no doubt can be made by any that hath ever so little read and compared the Old and New Testament. We are plainly told that those excellent Persons mentioned in that famous roll*, liv'd by that faith, *which was the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen.* That of them *Abraham, Isaac,* and *Jacob,* while they lived in *Canaan,* yet *sought a better, an heavenly Country; Confessing themselves pilgrims and strangers on earth.* We know it was the more general belief of the *Jews* in our Saviours *time*. And whence should they

Heb. 11. ver. 2. 9. 13. 14. 15. 16.

they have it, but from the Old Teſtament? Thither our Saviour remits them to ſearch it out, and the way to it. The Apoſtle Saint *Paul* gives it as the common faith of the twelve Tribes; grounded upon the promiſe made to their forefathers: and thence *prudentially* he herein ſtates the Cauſe, wherein he was *now* engag'd; ſuppoſing it would be generally reſented, that he ſhould be call'd in queſtion, for avowing (onely) ſo known, and received a truth. Sure, they were beholding to theſe ſacred Writings they had then among them, for ſo common a belief: and ſince it is out of queſtion, from our Saviours expreſſe words, they do contain the ground of that belief; what cauſe have we to be ſo ſhy of ſo interpreting Scriptures, that have a fair aſpect that way?

John 5. 39. Act. 16. & 6. 7. *compared with the* 8.

Is it, that we can deviſe to faſten here and there another ſence upon divers ſuch? I wonder, what one text can be mentioned in all the Old Teſtament to this purpoſe, wherein one may not do ſo: and what then would be the tendency of this courſe, but to deny in *all the particulars*: what, upon ſo clear evidence, we are, *in the general*, forced to admit? and to put *Moſes*, and *Abraham*, and *David* in a lower claſſe, then *Pythagoras*, and *Socrates*, and *Plato*.

And I think, it would not be eaſie to find one text in all that part of the Bible; where both the words thereof, and the context, do more fairly comply than in this, ſo as not only to admit, but even to invite that interpretation.

For the terme [ *awake* ] about which the preſent enquiry is, how apt and obvious is the analogy between our awaking out of natural ſleep, and the holy ſouls emerging out of the darkneſſe and torpor of its preſent ſtate into the invigorating light of Gods preſence. It is *truely* ſaid ſo to *awake*, at its firſt quitting theſe darkſom regions, *when* it layes aſide its cumberſom night-vail. It doth ſo more perfectly in the joyful morning of the Reſurrection day, when mortality is ſwallowed up in life, and all the yet-hovering ſhaddows of it are vaniſhed and fled away. And how known and uſual an application this is of the metaphorical terms of *ſleeping* and *awaking* in holy Writ, I need not tell them, who have read the Bible. Nor doth this interpretation leſſ fitly accord to the other contents of this verſe. For to what ſtate do the *ſight of Gods Face* and *ſatisfaction with his likeneſſe*, ſo fully agree as to that of future bleſſedneſſe in the other world.

But then the contexture of diſcourſe, in this and the foregoing verſe together, ſeems plainly to determine us to this ſenſe. For what can be more conſpicuous in them, then a purpoſed compariſon and oppoſition of two States of Felicity mutually each to other? *That of the wicked*, whom he calls *Men of* מֵמֵתִים *time* ( as the words are rendred by *one, מחלד and do literally ſignifie ) and *whoſe portion*, he tells us, *is in this Life*; and *the righteous man's*, his own; which he expected not to be, till he ſhould awake, *i. e.* not till *after this life*.

*Nonnes determinate, Pagnin.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, it is further to be enquired, how we are here to underſtand [the likeneſs of God] I doubt not but we are to underſtand by it, *his glory*. And the only difficulty which it will be neceſſary, at preſent, to conſider, about it, is; whether we are to take it *objectively* or *ſubjectively*, for the glory to be *repreſented* to the bleſſed ſoul; or the glory to be *impreſt* upon it; the glory which it is to *behold*, or the glory it ſhall *bear*. And I conceive the difference is more eaſily capable of *accommodation* then of a ſtrict *deciſion* on either part. 3.

By [Face] is undoubtedly meant *objective glory*, and that in its moſt perfect repreſentation (the face being, as we know with men, the chief ſeat of a ſpectable Majeſty and Beauty.) Hence when *Moſes* deſires to ſee Gods glory; though he did vouchſafe ſome diſcovery of it, yet he tells him his *face* cannot be ſeen. Hereupon, therefore, the next expreſſion [thy likeneſs] might the more plauſibly be reſtrained to *ſubjective glory*; So as to denote the Image of God now in its moſt perfect impreſſion on the bleſſed ſouls.

But that I inſiſt not on; Suppoſing therefore, that what is ſignified by [Face] be repeated over again in this word [likeneſs] yet I conceive the expreſſion is not varied in vain, but having more to ſay than only that he expected a ſtate of future *Viſion*, viz. that he aſſured himſelf of *ſatisfaction* too, another word was thought fit to be uſed that might ſignifie alſo *ſomewhat* that muſt intervene in order to that ſatisfaction. 'Tis certain the meer objective

objective representation and consequent intuition of the most excellent, (even the Divine) glory, cannot satisfie a soul remaining disaffected and unsuitable thereunto. It can only satisfie, as *being represented*, it forms the soul into the same image, and attempers it to it self. *q. d.* I expect hereafter to see the blessed Face of God, and to be my self blessed or satisfied by his glory, at once appearing to me and transfusing it self upon me. In short therefore, I understand by that tearm, *the glory of God as transforming*, or, *as impressive of it self*. If therefore, *Glory the Object of the soul's Vision*, shall by any be thought to be intended in it, I contend not; Supposing only, that the *Object* be taken not *materially*, or *potentially* only, for the thing visible in it self considered; but *formally*, and *in esse actuali objecti*: that is, as now *actually impressing it self*, or as connoting such an impression upon the beholding soul. For so only is it productive of such a pleasure and *satisfaction* to it, as must ensue. As in this form of speech [such a man takes pleasure in knowledge] it is evident knowledge must be taken there both *objectively*, for the things known, and *subjectively*, for the actual perception of those things; in as much as, apparently, *both* must concur to work him delight. So it will appear, to any one that attentively considers it, *glory* must be taken in that passage *we rejoyce in hope of the glory of God.* Rom 5. 2. 'Tis Divine glory both *revealed* and *received*. His exhibition and communication of it, according to his *immensity*, and our participation

tion of it, according to our *meaſure* that muſt concurr to our eternal ſatisfaction. Herein the Platonique adage † hath evident truth in it. Pleaſure is here certainly made up of ſomething finite and ſomething infinite, meeting together. 'Tis not (as the Philoſopher ſpeaks) a χωριστὸν but a καθ' ὅτι, not any thing ſeparate from the ſoul, but ſomething it poſſeſſes that can make it happy. 'Tis not happy by an incommunicate happineſs, nor glorious by an incommunicate glory. Indeed the diſcovery of ſuch a glory to an inglorious unholy ſoul muſt rather torment than ſatisfie. The future glory of Saints is therefore called *a glory to be revealed in them* (or into them as the word ſignifies.) And in the foregoing words, the Apoſtle aſſures Chriſts fellow ſufferers that they ſhall be *glorified* together with him. Surely the notation of that word, the formall notion of glorification cannot import ſo little as only, *to be a Spectator of Glory*: it muſt ſignifie a being *made glorious*.

† *Voluptatis generationeſt ex infiniti & finiti copulatione.*

Rom. 8. 18. εἰς ἡμᾶς

Nor is the common and true Maxime otherwiſe intelligible, that grace and glory differ only in degree For certainly, it could never enter into the mind of a *ſober* man (though how dangerouſly ſome ſpeak that might poſſibly have been ſo if too much learning had not made them *mad*, will be animadverted in its place) that *objective glory, and grace in Saints*, were the ſame ſpecifique (much leſs the ſame numerical) thing.

'Tis true that Scripture often expreſſes the future bleſſedneſs by *viſion of God*. But where that

that phrase is used to signifie it alone, 'tis evident (as within the lower region of grace, words of knowledge do often imply affection, and correspondent impressions on the soul) it must be understood of affective transformative Vision, such as hath conformity to God most inseparably conjunct with it. And, that we might understand so much, they are elsewhere, both expressly mentioned together, as joynt-ingredients into a Saints blessedness; as in those words so full of clear and rich sense. *When he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.*

Which Text I take for a plain Comment upon this; and me-thinks it should not easily be supposeable they should both speak so near the same words and not intend the same sense: you have in both the same season *When he shall appear*, when *I shall awake*, the same subject the *righteous* person *born of God*, (compare the close of the former Chapter with the beginning of this) and *I in righteousness*, The same Vision, *We shall see him as he is, I shall behold his face*, The same Assimilation, *We shall be like him, I shall be satisfied with his likeness*; (concerning the χάρις or habitude this vision and assimilation mutually have to one another, there will be consideration had in its place.)

I therefore conceive neither of these Notions of the *Divine likeness*, do exclude the other; if it be enquired which is principally meant, That needs not be determined; if the latter, it supposes the former; if the former, it infers the latter. Without the first, the other

other cannot be, without this other, the firſt cannot ſatisfie.

If any yet diſagree to this Interpretation of this Text, let them affix the Doctrine propounded from it to that other laſt mentioned (which only hath not the expreſſe mention of a conſequent ſatisfaction as this hath, whence therefore, as being in this reſpect fuller, my thoughts were pitch'd upon this.)

Only withal let it be conſidered how much more eaſie it is, to *imagine another* ſenſe, and ſuppoſe it poſſible, than to *diſprove* this, or evince it *impoſſible*. How far probable it is, muſt be left to the judgment of the indifferent: With whom, it may not be inſignificant to add, that thus (moſtly) it hath been underſtood by Interpreters, (I might adventure to ſay the generality) of all ſorts: however the few annexed † (for I neither apprehend the *neceſſity*, nor have the preſent *conveniency* of alledging many) will ſuffice to avoid any imputation of ſingularity or novelty.

† *Agitur de reſurrectione & Manifeſtatione gloriæ cœleſtis.* Ruffin. in loc. *Cum apparuerit gloria tua. i. e. gloria reſurrectionis.* Bed. Comment. in Pſalm. How the Jews were wont to underſtand it, may be ſeen at one view in that of *Petrus Galatinus* in loc. *Duo mi Caprio, me hic per priſcas Judæorum Scripturas oſtendere hortaris, & generalem mortuorum reſurrectionem futuram eſſe & eam per Meſſiam factum iri, Primum itaque patet non ſolum per ſacræ ſcripturæ teſtimonia verum etiam per Talmudiſtarum dicta. Nam illud quidem* Pſal. 17. *dictum Ego in juſtitiâ——&c. ſic exponunt, & preſertim Rabbi Abraham Aven Ezra & Rabbi Solomo, &c.* And ſo he goes on to recite their words. *De Arcanis Catholicæ veritatis.*

*Oppoſita hæc, iis quæ de impiis dixerat. Illi Sapiunt terrena Saturantur filiis, & portionem ſuam in hâc vitâ ponunt, mihi verò contempta iſti hac vita; ad futuram feſtino, ubi non in divitiis, ſed in juſtitiâ videbo non terrena hæc tranſitura, ſed ipſam faciem tuam, nec ſaturabor in filiis carnis ſed cum evigilavero tuâ ſimilitudine ſicut.* 1 John 3 2. ——*Cum apparuerit, &c.* Luth in Pſalm.

——*Reſurgam à mortuis——videbo te perfectiſſimè ſicut es Similis ero tibi* Jun. & Tremel. in Pſal. 17.

*Molleruſ*

*Mollerus* thinks it ought not to be reſtrained to life Eternal, but ſaith, ſome underſtand it of the glory, *quâ ornabuntur pii in vitâ æternâ.* And adds, —*& quidem non malè.* in loc.

——*Ego verò & omnes electi tui —piè & juſtè vivimus in hoc ſæculo, ut aliquando in futuro ſæculo videamus faciem tuam, & eâ ſatiemur cum ſuſcitàbimur à pulvere terræ (vigilaverimus & reformati fuerimus ad ſimilitudinem Chriſti tui.* Seb. Munſter. in notis in loc.

——*Cum ego ad imaginem tuam conditus reſurrexero. Vatablus* (though he adds, *alii ad reſurrectionem non referunt.*)

——*De futuræ vitæ fœlicitate ait ſatiabor quum expergiſcar. i. e. quum reſurgam è mortuis* ——— *Similitudine tuâ hoc eſt videbo te perfectiſſimè, ſicuti es & ſimilis ero tibi quum patefactus Chriſtus glorioſo adventu ſuo.* 1 John 3 2. Fabrit. Conc. in Pſ. 17. ult.

*Deſcribit his verbis Pſalmographus beatitudinem æternam filiorum Dei.* Geſnerus in loc.

## CHAP. II.

*A ſummary propoſal of the Doctrine contained in this Scripture. A diſtribution of it into three diſtinct Heads of Diſcourſe,* viz. 1. *The qualified ſubject.* 2. *The Nature.* 3. *The ſeaſon of the bleſſedneſs here ſpoken of. The firſt of theſe taken into conſideration, where the qualification* righteouſneſs *is treated of. About which is ſhewn,* 1. *What it is.* 2. *How it qualifies.*

NOW the foregoing ſenſe of the words being ſuppoſed, It appears that the proper Argument of this Scripture is, *The bleſſedneſs of the righteous in the other life, conſiſting in the viſion, and participation of the Divine glory, with the ſatisfaction that reſulteth thence.*

In

In which summary account of the Doctrine here contained. Three general Heads of Discourse offer themselves to our view.

The { Subject, Nature, Season, } of this Blessedness.

Or to whom it belongs, wherein it consists, and when it shall be enjoyed.

First then, we begin with the consideration of the subject, unto whom this blessedness appertains. And we find it expresst in the Text, in these only words [I; in righteousness] which amount to as much as *A Righteous person as such.* They represent to us, the subject of this Blessedness in its proper qualification. Wherein, our business is to consider his qualification, *Righteousness*, under which Notion only he is concerned in the present Discourse. And about which two things are to be enquired. 1.

What it Imports,
How it Qualifies.

First, What it imports. I take Righteousness here to be opposed to Wickedness in the foregoing verse, (as was intimated before) and so understand it in an equal Latitude: not of *particular*, but of *universal righteousness*: That is, not that particular vertue, which inclines men to *give* every one their right (unless in that *every one*, you *would* include also the blessed God himself, the Sovereign common Lord of all) but an universal rectitude of heart and life, comprehending not only equity towards men, but piety towards God also. A *conformity* 1.

mity to the Law in general, in its *utmoſt* extent,
1 John 1. 9. adequately oppoſite to *ſin*, (which is indeed of larger extent than wickedneſs; and in what different reſpects righteouſneſs is commenſurate to the one and the other, we ſhall ſee by and by) as that is, *generally*, ſaid to be ἀνομία,
1 John 3. 4. *a Tranſgreſſion of the Law.*

Ἐν δὲ δικαιοσύνῃ συλλήβδην πᾶσ' ἀρετὴ ἔνι. Among Moraliſts, ſuch a comprehenſive Notion of righteouſneſs as is incluſive of all other vertues is not unknown. But in Scripture, it is, its much more ordinary acceptation. To give inſtances, were to ſuppoſe too much ignorance in the Reader, and to enumerate the paſſages in which this term is taken in that extenſive ſenſe, were too great an unneceſſary burden to the writer. It were indeed to tranſcribe a great part of the Bible. How familiar is the oppoſition of righteous and wicked, and righteous and ſinner in ſacred Language! And how fully coextent righteouſneſs is in the Scripture Notion of it to the whole Law of God, that one paſſage ſufficiently diſcovers, Where
Luke 1. 5, 6. 'tis ſaid of *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth* that they were both *righteous* before God, walking *in all the commandments* and *ordinances* of the Lord blameleſs.

'Tis true indeed, that when the words *godlineſs* or *holineſs* are in conjunction with this tearm, its ſignificancy is divided and ſhared with them, ſo as that *they* ſignifie, in that caſe, *conformity to the will of God* in the duties of the *firſt* Table, and *this* is confined to thoſe of the *ſecond*: Otherwiſe, being put alone, it ſignifies the *whole of man*; as the other expreſ-

ſions

sions also do in the same case, especially the latter of them.

As it seems not to be within the present design of the Context to take notice of any *imputed wickednes*, of the opposite sort of persons, other than what was *really in them*, and whereby they might be fitly characterized: so I conceive, *imputed righteousnes* is not here meant that is inherent in the person of the Mediator, but that which is truly subjected in a child of God, and descriptive of him. Nor must any think it strange, that all the requisites to our Salvation are not found together in one Text of Scripture. The righteousnes of Him, whom we are to adore as made *sin* for us, that we might be made the righteousnes of God in him, hath a much higher sphear peculiar and appropriate to it self. *This* of which we now speak, in its own inferiour and subordinate place, is necessary also to be, (both had and) understood.

It must be understood by viewing it in its Rule, in conformity whereto it stands; which must needs be some Law of God. There hath been a twofold Law given by God to mankind, as the measure of a *universal* Righteousnes, the one made for *innocent*, the *other* for *lapsed* man, which are distinguished by the Apostle under the names of the *Law of works*, and the Law of *faith*. It can never be possible, that any of the Apostate Sons of *Adam*, should be denominated Righteous by the former of these Laws, the Righteousnes thereof consisting in a perfect and sinless obedience. Rom. 3. 27.

The latter therefore is the onely measure and rule of this Righteousness, *viz.* The *Law of Faith*; or that part of the Gospel-revelation which contains and discovers our duty, what we are to be and do in order to our Blessedness; being, as to the matter of it, the whole Moral Law, before appertaining to the Covenant of Works; attempered to the state of faln sinners, by evangelical mitigations and indulgency by the super-added precepts of repentance and faith in a Mediator, with all the other duty respecting the Mediator, as such: and cloathed with a new form as it is *now* taken into the constitution of the Covenant of grace.

This Rule, though it be in the whole of it capable of coming under one common Notion, *as being the standing obliging Law of Christs mediatory Kingdom*, yet according to the different matter of it, its obligations and annexed sanctions are different.

As to its matter; it must be understood to require

1. The meer being and sincerity of those gracious principles with their essential Acts (as there is opportunity) expressed therein, in opposition to the nullity and insincerity of them.

2. All the possible degrees and improvements of such principles and acts, in opposition to any the least failure or defect. *In the former respect*, it measures the very essence of this Righteousness, and enjons what concerns the *being* of the righteous man as such: *in the latter*, it measures all the super-added degrees of this righteousness, (which relations, where they

they have a mutable foundation admit) injoyning what concern's the perfection of the righteous man. *In the former reſpect, righteouſneſs* is oppoſed to *wickedneſs*, as in that of the Pſalmiſt, *I have kept the wayes of the Lord and have not wickedly departed from my God* —— *therefore hath the Lord recompenced me according to my righteouſneſs.* In the latter to *ſin*, with which the Apoſtle makes unrighteouſneſs coextent, in theſe words, *If we ſay we have no ſin we deceive our ſelves*, &c. *if we confeſs our ſins he is faithful and juſt to forgive us our ſins and to cleanſe us from all unrighteouſneſs.*

Pſalm 18. 21. Ver. 24.

Accordingly are its ſanctions divers. For wherein it injoyns the former of theſe, *the eſſence of this righteouſneſs*, in oppoſition to a total abſence thereof; it is conſtitutive of the terms of ſalvation, and *obligeth* under the penalty of eternal death: So are *faith, repentance, love, ſubjection*, &c. required, *If ye believe not that I am he ye ſhall dye in your ſins. He that believeth not is condemned already.* —— *The wrath of God abideth on him* —— *If ye repent not ye ſhall all likewiſe periſh. Repent that your ſins may be blotted out.* —— *Him hath God exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance and remiſſion of ſins. If any man love not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, let him be Anathema Maran-atha. He that loveth Father or Mother more than me is not worthy of me*, &c. *If any man come to me and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren, and Siſters, yea, and his own life alſo* (that is as the former Scripture expounds this, loves them not leſs than me) *he cannot be*

John 8. 24. c. 3. 18, 36. Luke 13. 3, 5. Act. 3. 19. c. 5. 31. 1 Cor. 16. 22. Mat. 10. 37. Luke 14. 26.

*my Diſciple,* (*i. e.* While he remains in that temper of mind he now is of, he muſt needs be wholly unrelated unto me, and uncapable of benefit by me, as well as he is indocible, and not ſuſceptible of my further inſtructions, neither capable of the precepts or priviledges belonging to Diſcipleſhip.) *He is the Author of eternal Salvation to all them that obey him,* and *will come in flaming fire to take vengeance of thoſe that know not God, and obey not his Goſpel; who ſhall be puniſhed with everlaſting deſtruction from the preſence of the Lord,* &c. Where it is only the ſincerity of thoſe ſeveral requiſites, that is, under ſo ſevere penalty, exacted and called for, in as much as he that is ſincerely a Believer, a Penitent, a lover of God or Chriſt, an obedient Subject, is not capable of the contrary denomination, and therefore not liable, according to the tenour of this Law, to be puniſhed as an Infidel, an impenitent perſon, an enemy, a rebell.

Heb. 5. 9. 2 Theſ. 1. 8, 9, &c.

When it enjoyns the latter, *viz.* All the ſubſequent duty through the whole courſe whereof the already ſincere ſoul muſt be tending towards perfection; though it bind not thereto under pain of damnation further then as ſuch neglects and miſcarriages, may be ſo groſs and continued, as not to conſiſt with ſincerity: Yet ſuch injunctions are not wholly without penalty, but here it oblidges, under leſs penalties, the hiding of Gods face, and other paternal ſeverities, and caſtigations. They that thus only offend, *are chaſtened of the Lord, that they may not be condemned with the world.*

1 Cor. 11.

*orld. Their iniquity is viſited with the Rod, and* Pſalm 89.
*heir tranſgreſſion with ſtripes, though loving-*
*indneſſe be not taken away*—— Yea, and while
hey are ſhort of perfect holineſs, their bleſ-
edneſs is imperfect alſo; which is to be
cknowledged a very grievous penalty, but un-
onceiveably ſhort of what befalls them that
re *ſimply unrighteous*. That it obliges thus
*iverſly* is evident; for it doth not adjudge un-
o eternal death for the leaſt defect; for then
hat other Law ſhould relieve againſt the ſen-
ence of this? or wherein were this a relieving
*aw*? Yet doth it require perfection, that we
*erfect holineſs in the fear of God*, that we *be per-* 2 Cor. 7. 1.
*ect as our Father in heaven is perfect*. And o- Mat. 5.
herwiſe, did it bind to no other duty than
hat it makes ſimply neceſſary to Salvation, the
efects, and miſcarriages that conſiſt with ſin-
erity, were no ſins not being provided againſt
y any Law that is of preſent obligation. For
ſuppoſe the Law of works in its own proper
rm, and tenour to be ſtill obliging, is to ſup-
oſe all under hopeleſs condemnation; in as
uch as all have ſinned. And beſides, it ſhould
blige to caſt off all regard to Chriſt and to
ek bleſſedneſs without him, yea, and it
ould oblige to a natural impoſſibility, to a
ontradiction: to make that not to have been
hich hath been: a ſinner to ſeek happineſs
never having ſinned. Yet though it cannot
in its own form be mans rule of Duty, 'tis ne-
ertheleſs Gods rule of Judgment upon all
hom the Law of faith relieves not, as not
oming up to the terms of it (whom alſo this

ſuper-veningLaw brings under a ſuper-vening aggravated condemnation) For where the *obligation to obedience* is violated, the *obligation to puniſhment*, naturally takes place.

The rule of this Righteouſneſs therefore being evidently *the Law of Faith*, the Goſpel-revelation, wherein it is preceptive of duty. This Righteouſneſs can be underſtood to be nothing but the impreſſe of the Goſpel upon a mans heart and life. A conformity in Spirit and Practice to the revelation of the Will of God in Jeſus Chriſt, a collection of graces exerting themſelves in ſuitable actions and deportments towards God and man. *Chriſt formed* in the ſoul, or *put on*; the *new creature* in its *being* and *operations*, *the truth learned as it is in Jeſus*, *to the putting off the old man and the putting on the new.*

More diſtinctly, we may yet ſee wherein it lyes, upon a premiſed view of ſome few things neceſſary to be foreknown in order thereunto. As

That this righteouſneſs is a *renewing righteouſneſs*, or the righteouſneſs of one formerly a ſinner, a lapſed periſhing wretch, who is by it, reſtored into ſuch a ſtate towards God as he was in before that lapſe (in reſpect of certain *great eſſentials*, though as yet his ſtate be not ſo perfectly good while he is in his tendency and motion; And ſhall, by certain *additionals*, be unſpeakably better, when he hath attained the end and reſt he is tending to.)

That a reaſonable creature, yet untainted with ſin, could not but have a temper of mind ſuteable

ſuteable to ſuch apprehenſions as theſe, *Viz.* That as it was not the Author of being to it ſelf, ſo it ought not principally to ſtudy the pleaſing and ſerving of it ſelf, but him, who gave it being: that it can no more continue and perfect it ſelf unto bleſſedneſs, than it could create it ſelf; and can therefore have no expectation hereof, but from the ſame Author of its being: And hence that it muſt reſpect, and eye the great God, its Creator, and Maker, as

The { Soveraign Authority whom it was to fear, and obey.
Soveraign Good whom it was to love, and enjoy.

But becauſe it can perform no *duty*, to him, without knowing what he will have it *do*; nor have any particular expectation of favours from him, without knowing what he will pleaſe to *beſtow*: and is therefore obliged to attend to the revelations of his Will concerning both theſe. It is therefore neceſſary, that he eye him under a notion introductive, and ſubſervient to all the operations, that are to be exerted towards him, under the two former notions: *i. e.* as the *Eternal never failing Truth*, ſafely to be depended on, as intending nothing of deceit in any the revelations, whether of his *righteous Will*, concerning matter of *duty to be done*, or of his *good Will*, concerning matter of *beneſit to be expected and enjoyed*.

That Man did apoſtatize and revolt from God, as conſidered under theſe ſeverall notitions;

ons: And returns to him, when an holy rectitude is recovered, and he again becomes righteous, conſidered under the ſame.

That it was not agreeable to Gods wiſedom, truth, and legal juſtice, to treat with Man a *Sinner*, in order to his recovery, but through a Mediator: and that therefore he was pleaſed in wonderfull mercy, to conſtitute and appoint his own Son Jeſus Chriſt *God-man*, unto that Office and Undertaking; that, through him, man might return and be reconciled to himſelf, whom he cauſleſſely forſook; deſigning that man ſhall now become ſo affected towards himſelf, through the Mediator; and firſtly therefore towards the Mediators own perſon, as he was before, and ought to have been towards himſelf immediately.

Therefore, whereas God was conſiderable, in relation to Man, both in his innocency and Apoſtacy, under that forementioned two fold notion of the ſupream { Authority. / Goodneſs.

He hath alſo ſet up and exalted our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and repreſented him to Sinners under an anſwerable two fold notion of a { Prince / Saviour

*i. e.* a mediating Prince and Saviour to give repentance firſt; to bow and ſtoop the hearts of ſinners, and reduce them to a ſubject poſture again, and then remiſſion of ſins to reſtore them to favour and ſave them from the wrath to come. Him hath the Father cloth'd with his own authority, and fill'd with his grace

grace: requiring ſinners to *ſubmit* themſelves to his *ruling power*, and *commit* themſelves to his *ſaving mercy*; now both lodg'd in this his Son: to pay *him immediately*, all homage and obedience, and through him *ultimately* to himſelf; from him *immediately*, to expect Salvation and bleſſedneſs, and through him *ultimately* from himſelf.

That whereas the Spirits of men are not to be wrought to this temper, but by the intervention of a *diſcovery and revelation* of the divine Will to this purpoſe: Our Lord Jeſus Chriſt is further appointed by the Father to reveal all this his counſel to Sinners. And is eminently ſpoken of in Scripture upon this account, under the notion of *the Truth*, in which capacity he more effectually recommends to Sinners, both his *authority* and his *grace*. So that his three fold (ſo much celebrated) Office of { King, Prieſt, Prophet, } (the diſtinct parts of his general Office as Mediator) which he manages in order to the reducement of loſt Sinners, exactly correſpond (if you conſider the more eminent acts, and properties of each Office) to that threefold notion under which the Spirit of Man muſt alwayes have eyed and been acted towards God, had he never fallen, and hence this righteouſneſs, which conſiſts in conformity to the Goſpel, is the former righteouſneſs, *which was loſt*; with ſuch an acceſſion as is neceſſary, upon conſideration that it was loſt, and was only to be recovered by a Mediator. There-

Therefore you may now take this short, and as compendious an account as I can give of it, in what follows.

It includes; so *firm and understanding an assent* to the truth of the whole Gospel Revelation, as that the soul is thereby brought, through the power of the Holy Ghost, sensibly to apprehend its former *disobedience* to God, and *distance* from him, the *reasonableness* of *subjection* to him and *desirableness* of *blessedness* in him; the *necessity* of a Redeemer to reconcile, and recover it to God; the accomplishment and designation of the Lord Jesus Christ to that purpose: And hence, a *penitent* and *complacential return* to God, as the *supream Authority*, and *soveraign Good*, an *humble* and *joyful* acceptance of our Lord Jesus Christ as its *Prince* and *Saviour*, with *submission* to his *Authority*, and *reliance* on his *grace* (the exercise of both which are founded in his blood) looking and pitching upon *him*, as the only *medium*, through which he and his *duties* can *please* God, or God and his mercies *approach* him: and through which he hath the confidence to venture upon a Covenant-acceptance of God, and surrender himself to him, afterward pursued to his uttermost, by a continued course of living in his *fear* and *love*, in *obedience* to him, and *communion* with him *through the Mediator*, always, while he is passing the *time* of his pilgrimage *in this world*, groaning under remaining sin, and pressing after perfect holiness: with an earnest expectation (animating him to a persevering patience through all difficulties)

difficulties) of a blessed eternity *in the other world.*

That such a conformity to the Gospel should be expressed by the name of *righteousness*, cannot seem strange to such as acquaint themselves with the language of the Scripture. That gracious frame which the Gospel (made essential) impresses upon the soul, is the *Kingdom of God*, in the passive notion of it, his *Kingdom received* and now actually come with power upon our Spirits. And *this Kingdom*, (sometimes also by an apt *Synecdoche* called *Judgment* in the same notion) is said to consist in *righteousness*; whence then result also, *Peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.* Rom. 14. 17. The same *holy impressions*, and consequent operations are mentioned, by the Apostle, under the name of *fruits of righteousness*, Phil. 1. 11. wherewith he prayes his Philippians might be filled. It was *Elymas*'s opposition to the Gospel, that stigmatized him with that brand, Thou enemy of all *righteousness*. To yield our selves servants to *righteousness*, in opposition to a former servitude to *sin*; is *obeying from the heart the Doctrine* of the Gospel, *into the type or mould whereof we have been cast* or *delivered.* And sure, both the *seal* and the *impression*, Gods revelation and holiness (however now more explicite and distinctly conspicuous in all their parts) are the same, with us, *substantially*, and in *Davids* time; whence we need make no difficulty to own this *latter*, when we meet with it, as here, under the same Name.

By what hath hitherto been said, it may be already seen in part, how exactly this *righteousness*

*teouſneſs* correſponds to the bleſſedneſs for which it qualifies; whereof we ſhall have occaſion hereafter to take further notice. In the mean time, it will be requiſite to ſhew (which was promiſed to be done in the next place.)

2. *How it qualifies.* To which I ſay (very briefly) that it qualifies for this bleſſedneſſe two wayes.

1. *Legally*, or *in genere Morali*, as it deſcribes the Perſons, who by the Goſpel-grant, have, alone, title thereunto. ——*The righteous into life eternal.* ——*The unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God. Say to the righteous it ſhall be well with them. The righteouſneſs of the righteous ſhall be upon him.* ——*In his righteouſneſs he ſhall live.* In which laſt words, how this righteouſneſs conduceth to life is expreſt by the ſame Præpoſition as in the Text. In this kind it is not at all cauſal of this bleſſedneſſe, but 'tis that which the free, and wiſe, and holy Law-giver thought meet, by his ſettled conſtitution (beſides what neceſſity there is of it upon another account) to make requiſite thereto. The conformity of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt to that ſeverer Law, under which he is ſaid to have been made, is that which alone cauſes, merits, purchaſes this bleſſedneſs which yet is to be enjoyed, not by all *indiſcriminatim*, or without diſtinction; but by ſuch alone, as come up to the terms of the *Goſpel*, as he did fully ſatisfie the ſtrict exactions of that other rigid Law, by doing and ſuffering for their ſakes.

Mat. 25.
1 Cor. 6.
Iſa. 3.
Ezek. 18.

2. *Naturally*, or *in genere Phyſico.* In this kind

kind it may be ſaid to be ſome way cauſal, that is, to be a *cauſa materialis diſpoſitiva*, by a proper poſitive influence, diſpoſing the ſubject unto this bleſſedneſs, which that it *ſhall*, yet, enjoy, is wholly to be reſolved into the Divine good pleaſure, but it is put by this holy rectitude into that temper, and poſture that it *may* enjoy it, through the Lords gracious vouchſafement; when without it, 'twere naturally impoſſible that any ſhould. An unrighteous impure ſoul, is in a natural indiſpoſition to *ſee God* or *be bleſſed in him*. That depraved temper averts it from him, the ſteady bent of its will is ſet another way, and 'tis a contradiction that any (*in ſenſu compoſito*) *ſhould* be happy againſt their wills, *i. e.* while that averſion of will yet remains. The unrighteous baniſh themſelves from God, they ſhun, and hate his preſence. Light and darkneſs cannot have communion. The Sun doth but ſhine, continue to be it ſelf, and the darkneſs vaniſhes, and is fled away. When God hath ſo determined that only *the pure in heart ſhall ſee him*, that *without holineſs none ſhall*; he layes no other Law upon unholy ſouls than what their own impure natures lay upon themſelves. If therefore it ſhould be enquired, Why may not the unrighteous be ſubjects of this bleſſedneſs, *See God*, and *be ſatisfied with his likeneſs*, as well as the righteous; the queſtion muſt be ſo anſwered, as if it were enquired, Why doth wood admit the fire to paſſe upon it, ſuffer its flames to inſinuate themſelves till they have introduced its proper form, and turned it into

their

their own likeneſs: but we ſee water doth not ſo, but violently reſiſts its firſt approaches and declines all commerce with it? The natures of theſe agree not. And is not the contrariety here as great? We have then the qualified ſubject of this bleſſedneſs; and are next to conſider *This Bleſſedneſs it ſelf.*

## CHAP. III.

*The nature of this Bleſſedneſs propounded unto conſideration, in the three ingredients (here mentioned) whereof it conſiſts.* 1. *Viſion of Gods Face.* 2. *Aſſimilation to him.* 3. *The ſatisfaction reſulting thence. Theſe propounded to be conſidered* 1. *Abſolutely and ſingly each by it ſelf.* 2. *Relatively in their mutual reſpects to each other. The firſt of theſe, Viſion of Gods Face diſcourſt of.* 1. *The Object.* 2. *The Act.*

2. NOW for *the Nature of this Bleſſedneſs*; or the inquiry wherein it lyes, ſo far as the Text gives us any account of it, we are invited to turn our thoughts and diſcourſe to it. And we have it here repreſented to us in all the particulars that can be ſuppoſed to have any nearer intereſt in the buſineſs of Bleſſedneſs, or to be more intimate and intrinſical thereunto.

For

For (the beatifique Object supposed) what more can be necessary to actual, compleat formall blessednes, than *the sight of it*, an *adaptation or assimilation to it* (which is nothing else but its being actually communicated and imparted to the soul, its being united and made as it were one with it) and the *complacential fruition* the soul hath of it so communicated, or having so transformed it into its self?

And these three are manifestly contained in the Text (the beatifique Object being involved with them) the first in the former clause, *I shall behold thy face*, the second and third in the latter, *I shall be satisfied with thy likeness*; where, *being made like to God* hath been discovered to be supposed, & the *satisfaction*, the pleasant contentful relishes consequent thereto, plainly expresst.

We shall therefore have stated the entire nature of this Blessednes in the handling of these three things.

- Vision of the Face of God.
- Participation of his likeness.
- Satisfaction therein.

And I shall chuse to consider them

1. *Absolutely*, and singly, each by it self.
2. *Relatively*, in the mutual respects (by way of influence and dependence) they may be found to have towards each other.

Therefore first, in the absolute consideration of them severally, we begin with

First the Vision of Gods Face, where

The { *Object*, *the Face of God*,
*Act* of seeing and beholding it are distinctly to be spoken to.

1. *The*

1. *The Face of God* (the Object of this Viſion) which is his glory repreſented, offered to view. And *this objected or exhibited glory* is twofold.

1. *Senſible*, ſuch as ſhall incurr and gratifie (after the reſurrection) the bodily eye.

2. *Intellectual*, or *intelligible*: that *ſpiritual glory* that only comes under the view and contemplation of the glorified mind.

1. A ſenſible glory, (to begin with what is lower) is fitly in our way to be taken notice of; and may well be comprehended (as its leſſe-principal intendment) within the ſignificancy of the expreſſion *the Face of God*. So indeed it doth evidently ſignifie, *Exod.* 33. 11. And if we look to the *notation* of the word, and its frequent uſe as applied to God, it may commodiouſly enough and will often be found to ſignifie, in a larger and more extended ſenſe, any *aſpect* or *appearance* of God: And though it may be underſtood verſe 23. of that Chapter to ſignifie an overcoming ſpiritual glory, as the principal thing there intended, ſuch as no ſoul dwelling in fleſh, could behold, without renting the vail and breaking all to pieces; yet, even there alſo, may ſuch a degree of ſenſible glory be ſecondarily intended, as it was not conſiſtent with a ſtate of mortality to be able to bear.

And ſuppoſing the other expreſſion [Thy likeneſs] to ſignifie, in any part, the *objective glory* Saints are to behold, it is very capable of being extended ſo far, as to take in a ſenſible appearance of glory alſo, which it doth in theſe words

words, *The ſimilitude of the Lord ſhall he behold* (yet even that glory alſo was transformative and impreſſive of it ſelf: Moſes ſo long converſt with it, till he became uncapable, for the preſent, of converſe with men, as you know the ſtory relates.) Numb. 12. 8. to Ezek. 1. 28. Ex. 34. 35. &c.

Such a glory as this, though it belong not to the being of God, yet it may be ſome embrace of him, a more ſhadowy repreſentation, as a mans garments are of the man, which is the alluſion in that of the *Pſalmiſt*, *Thou art cloathed with Majeſty and Honour, Thou coverest thy ſelf with* [*Light*] *as with a Garment.* Pſ. 104. 1. 2.

And in as much as that ſpiritual Body (*the Houſe not made with hands*) wherewith the bleſſed are to be cloth'd upon, muſt then be underſtood to have its proper ſenſitive *Powers and Organs*, refined to that degree, as may be agreeable to a ſtate of Glory; ſo muſt theſe have their ſuitable *objects* to converſe with. A faculty without an object is not poſſible in Nature; and is altogether inconſiſtent with a ſtate of Bleſſedneſs. The bodies of Saints will be *raiſed in glory*—*faſhioned like Chriſts glorious body*; muſt bear the image of the heavenly; and this will connaturalize them to a Region of glory, render a ſurrounding ſenſible glory neceſſary, and natural to them, their own element: they will as it were not be able to live but amidſt ſuch a glory. Place is conſervative of the body placed in it, by its ſuitableneſs thereto. Indeed every created being (inaſmuch as it is not ſelf-ſufficient, *Caiſibet potentiæ activæ ſuum paſſivum ſuos objectum.* 1 Cor. 1. Phil. 3. 21.

and is obliged to fetch in continual refreſhings from without) muſt alwayes have ſomewhat ſuitable to it ſelf to converſe with, or it preſently languiſhes. By ſuch an harmony of actives and paſſives the world conſiſts and and holds together. The leaſt defect thereof, then, is leaſt of all ſuppoſeable in the ſtate of bleſſedneſs.

The rayes of ſuch a glory have often ſhone down into this lower World. Such a glory we know, ſhewed it ſelf upon Mount *Sinai*: afterwards often about the Tabernacle, and in the Temple, Such a glory appeared at our Saviours Birth, Baptiſm, and Transfiguration; and will do at his expected appearance, which leaves it no unimaginable thing to us; and ſhewes how facile it is to God to (do that which will then be, in ſome ſort neceſſary) creat a glory meet for the entertainment, and gratification of any ſuch faculty, as he ſhall then continue in being. But,

2. The *intellectuall glory*, That which perfected Spirits ſhall eternally pleaſe themſelves to behold, calls for our more eſpecial conſideration. This is the *glory that excelleth by perbollical* glory (as that expreſſion imports) ὑπερβαλλούσης δόξης. 2 Cor. 3 10. ſuch, as in compariſon whereof, the other is ſaid to be *no glory*: as the Apoſtle ſpeaks comparing the glory of the Legal, with that of the Evangelical diſpenſation, where the former was, we muſt remember, chiefly a ſenſible glory, the glory that ſhone upon Mount *Sinai*, the latter a purely ſpiritual glory; and ſurely if the meer preludes of *this glory*

*glory*, The *primordia*, the beginnings of it, *The glory — yet ſhining but through a glaſs* (as he there alſo ſpeaks of this glory) were ſo *hyperbollically* glorious, what will it be in its highest exaltation in its perfected ſtate? The Apoſtle cannot ſpeak of that, but with *hyperbole* upon *hyperbole* in the next chapter, as though he would heap up words as high as heaven to reach it, and give a juſt account of it. Καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν. 2 Cor. 4 17.

Things are as *their next Originals*. This glory more immediately, rayes forth from God, and more neerly repreſents him. 'Tis his more genuine production. He his ſtiled the *Father of Glory*: every thing that is glorious is ſome way like him, and bears his image. But he is as well the *Father of Spirits*, Eph. 1. Heb. 12. the Father of Glory; and that glory, which is purely ſpiritual, hath moſt in it of his nature and image: as beams but in the next deſcent from the body of the Sun. This is his unvailed face, and *emphatically*, the *divine* likeneſs.

Again things are as the *Faculties* which they are to exerciſe and ſatisfie, this glory muſt exerciſe and ſatisfie, the nobleſt faculty of the moſt noble and excellent creature. Intellectual nature in the higheſt improvement tis capable of in a creature muſt there be gratified to the uttermoſt, the moſt enlarged contemplative power of an immortal Spirit finds that wherein it terminates here, with a moſt contentful acquieſcence.

Tis true it muſt be underſtood not totally

to *exceed* the capacity of a creature, but it muſt fully *come up* to it. Should it quite tranſcend the Sphere of created nature, and ſurpaſs the modell of an humane underſtanding (as the divine glory undoubtedly would, did not God conſider us in the manner of exhibiting it to our view) it would *confound* not *ſatisfie*. A creature even in glory is ſtill a Creature, and muſt be treated as ſuch. After the bleſſed God hath elevated it to the higheſt pitch, he muſt infinitely condeſcend, it cannot otherwiſe know or converſe with him. He muſt accommodate this glory to the weaker eye, the fainter and more langaid apprehenſions of a poor finite thing. I had almoſt ſaid, *nothing*, for what is any creature, yea the whole creation in it's beſt ſtate compared with the *I AM*, the being (as he juſtly appropriates to himſelf that name) the All in All. We muſt be careful then to ſettle in our own thoughts ſuch a ſtate of this glory (in forming that indeterminate notion we have now of it) as may render it (though confeſſedly above the meaſure of our preſent underſtandings as to a diſtinct knowledge of it) not manifeſtly incompetent to any created underſtanding whatſoever, and as may ſpeak us *duly* ſhy of aſcribing a Deity to a worm, of affixing any thing to the creature, which ſhall be found not agreeing to the bleſſed God himſelf alone. Their expreſſions therefore, who overmagnifie (even deifie) the creature aſſumed into glory, muſt be heard and re-

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with caution and abhorrency, as the high swelling words of blasphemous vanity. Is it not enough that perishing wretches, that were within one hands breadth of Hell, are saved except they be also deified too? that they become *happy* unless they also become *Gods*? The distance even of a glorified creature from the glorious God is still infinitely greater, than between it and the silliest worm. The minutest atome of dust.

Not being willing to trouble a discourse wholly of another nature and design, with any thing of controversy: I have chosen onely to annex a marginall digression, wherein, somewhat to animadvert upon the overbold disputes and definitions of the Scholastique generation, touching what we have now under consideration. Some of whose Writings seem the very Springs of the putid conceits (there not wanting those, that are officious enough to serve the illiterate, in accommodating things of that kind to their genius and language) so greedily imbib'd by modern Enthusiasts.

Tis a Question much agitated among the School-men, whether the Divine Essence be exhibited to the veiw of the Blessed in Heaven, *in it self, immediately*, or, *by the interveniion of any created likenesse or similitude.*

Had it been agreed to forbear looking within this vail (the rude attempt whereof, rather rents than draws it aside) and to shut up all discourse of this kind, in a modest awful silence; or had the Adventures some have made been *soel sh* onely, not *pernicious*, this present labour had been spared. But when Men speak of things above their reach, not to no purpose barely, but to very *bad*; what they say ought to be considered. The Divine Essence, say the *Thomists* (and the *Scotists* here disagree not) is it self immediatedly united to the intellect of the blessed [*in ratione Speciei intelligibilis*] so as there is no place for any intervening likeness, or representation. *Ipsa Divina Essentia est, quæ videtur & quo videtur. Thom. Sum. primâ parte, q. 12. Art. 2. 3 contr. Gentes c. 51.* Now they assert concerning the *Species intelligibiles*, in general, that they have not, *Locum objecti, intellectum terminantis* (which they make the place and office of the *verbum mentis per intellectionem prodactum*) but *formæ tantùm & Actûs primi*, and that the understanding so acts by them, as fire by its proper form, *Thom. Sum. primâ parte, q. 85. Art. 2.* (the contrary where-

to is asserted by *Scotus in* 1. *Sentent. distinct.* 3. *q.* 6.) Yea and *Cajet.* affirms 1. *p. q.* 76. *Art.* 2. That

And by how much more we shall then know of *his glory*, so much more shall we understand *that distance*. Yet as he shall then enlarge the capacity of the soul he glorifies to a very vast comprehension, so shall

the Intellect and the intelligible species are more one than the matter and form in the *compositum*. For, saith he, (or to that purpose, not having him now at hand (the matter is not turned into the form nor *e contrà*, but the intellect, which is in it self *mere power*, doth, in *genere intelligibili* turn into its very intelligible object; and the intelligible object it self is after a certain manner imbib'd in the intellect. So *Ledesma de Divin. perfect. q.* 3. *Art.* 5. *unum transit in aliud ex quo sequitur, quòd unum sit aliud.* And hence, say they, applying this doctrine to the present purpose, [ *& secundum istum modum, in conjunctione illâ effabili divinæ essentiæ cum intellectu creato, sit unum agens integrum*, scil. *intellectus creatus factus Deus mirabili modo* ] [ *Intellectus in visione beatificâ, est potentia jam deificata, per lumen gloriæ*, Cajet. primâ parte q. 12 Art. 2. ex Ledel. q. 8. Art 8. ] For besides this immediate union of the Divine Essence it self with the intellect they assert a *lumen gloriæ*, an accident superadded, without which the vision cannot be performed; which additional the *Scotists* reject. Some, though they admit it, think the vision may be without it, and that it doth not *implicare contradictionem visionem beatificam fieri sine lumine gloriæ, cum solo speciali Dei auxilio, quod item asserunt multi ex scholasticis, Palud. in* 4. *dist.* 49. *q.* 1. *Art.* 3. *Concl.* 2. *Thom. de Argent. q.* 2. *Art.* 1. *Major. q.* 4. *Henr. quodlibet* 7. *Zumel.* 1. *p. q.* 12. *Art.* 5. *disp.* 2. *concl.* 3. *Ita Oviedo de virtute pœnitenti.* Whether there be any *verbum creatum*, the product of intellection, The *Thomists* are themselves divided. Their more common opinion is, that there is none, as *Ledesma* assures us; telling us also his reason, why he conceives there can be none. *Beati non formant verbum in videndo Deo, sed plus vident quam verbo creato dicere possunt* — *nam beatus per visionem beatam quamvis non videbat* [ *infinitè* ] *videt tamen infinitum.* — ( which is their great argument against any intelligible species) & he further adds, *sicut visio Dei quæ est in ipso Deo habet pro principio & specie intelligibili ipsam Divinam Essentiam; & pro termino ipsam Divinam Essentiam visio beatorum est ità supernaturalis, & divini ordinis, & participatio divinæ visionis ita*

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the exhibition of his glory to it, be fully adequate to its most inlarged capacity. They are as yet but obscure glimmerings, we can have of this glory; But so far as, without too bold curiosity, we may, and wherein Scripture light will give us any preapprehension of it, let us consider a while,

*perfecta, ut ipsa etiam habeat pro principio & specie intelligibili, divinâ Essentiâ, & pro termino sive verbo producto, ipsammet divinâ Essentiâ.*

So that the principle and term of this vision are own'd to be nothing else, but the simple Divine Essence. Concerning the formal act it self, it is much disputed, whether the creatures intellect do at all effectively concur to it, or whether God himself, be not the onely efficient or agent in this vision. Some stick not to affirm the latter, *Marsil. in 3. q. 1. Palud. in 4. dist. 49, q. 1, Art. 2.* (*referente Ledesmâ*) and say plainly, that the action of the inferiour agent wholly ceases, and the superiour onely acts, the same thing that D. M. *Casaubon* in his Enthusiasm charges one *Maximus* with, who in a book entituled [illegible] writes thus; *that divine vision [illegible] is it that [illegible] is made [illegible] by [illegible].* That the Soul taken into immediate union with God, loses all its knowing power (though this be not distinctively spoken of the state of glory, And what doth this amount to? but that while they are eagerly contending about the Saints blessednesse, and too curiously labouring to explicate the manner of their seeing God, they unawares destroy the subject of the question, and deny that they see him at all; and so upon the whole, dispute themselves into a worse than Paganish infidelity. And even the rest, that agree in the sense of the passages above recited, will not be easily able to avoid the charge of as intollerable consequences; which it is my businesse, here, onely to discover, and not to determine any thing in this controversie, whiles I tax the too much boldnesse of others, who adventure it. And here not to insist on the absurdity of what they say concerning the intelligible species in general, let it be considered. 1. That the Divine Essence is said to be united to the intellect of the blessed, as an *intelligible species*. 2. That the *intelligible species*, in the businesse of intellection, and the intellect, become one another, do not remain distinct things united, but are identified. 3. That hence in understanding God, the intellect is deified and becomes God, which naturally followes from the two former; and is moreover expressely asserted in plain words.

What need is there to presse this Doctrine with hard consequencies? or how can it look worse than it doth already, with its own natural face? Nor can I apprehend which way it should be made look better. For should it lay claim to that favour, to be understood according to the usual sense of the peripatetique maxime, *Intellectus, intelligendo, fit omnia*; it will be found manifestly to have precluded it self: That maxime is wont to be understood thus; that the intellect becomes that which it understands *representative*, by putting on the *species* or *likeness* of its Object, the representation of it. For instance, when I form in my mind the notion of a mountain, my understanding becomes an Ideal or Spiritual mountain: it becomes that species (which is liable to more exception too than I shall now insist on, and looks more like the language of a Poet than a Philosopher) that is now formed there; and not the material mountain it self. But how shall this assertion [*The understanding by its act of understanding God becomes God*] be capable of that interpretation, *i. e.* It becomes his *likeness*, his *Idea*, his representation now formed in it, when any such intervening likeness or representation is utterly denied; and that supposed species is said to be the simple Divine essence it self? and if the Divine essence it self be that species by which 'tis understood, will it not follow from that other *Aristotelian* axiome (which with them must signifie as much as a Text from Saint *Paul*) *scibile & scientia sunt idem*: That our very knowledge of God must be God too, or would they disown that maxime, sure, when once the *faculty* is supposed deified, the *act* immanent in it, cannot be a created accident; nor can that maxime (understood of the *scibile representativum*, or the *species scibilis*) be denied by them; And sure, if the Saints *knowledge of God*; the likeness of him in their *minds* be God; their *holiness*, the likeness of him in their *hearts*, must be so too. How absurd then would it be, to use that Scripture language, and speak of these under the names of Gods image or likeness, when *Similitude* and *Identity*, are notions so vastly disagreeing; and since a Saints knowledge and holiness

## The { Nature / Excellency } of it.

We cannot indeed consider these separately, for we can no sooner understand it to be *glory*, than we conceive it *excellent*; *Glory*, in the proper Notion of it, being nothing else but resplendent excellency, the lustre of excellency or real worth made conspicuous. Yet as there is an excellency

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conceivable in the nature of it, that excellency whereof it is the ſplendor and brightneſs; ſo we muſt conceive a peculiar excellency of that very radiation, that ſplendor it ſelf, wherewith it ſhines unto bleſſed ſouls. *In its very nature* it is the *brightneſs of Divine excellencies*: in its *preſent appearance*, it ſhines in the higheſt

here and in heaven differ but in degree; they can be, *here on earth*, nothing but God dwelling in them. And ſuppoſing that *Stotus* have

better defended than his adverſaries impugned the real identity of the ſoul and its faculties, *that* muſt be deified too. However, what could be imagined more abſurd, than that the ſubſtance of the ſoul ſhould be a creature, and its faculty God? Whence then do we think that modern ſimiliſts have fetcht their admired non-ſenſe? Whom have they had their original inſtructors? or who have taught them that brave magnificent language of being Godded with God, and Chriſted with Chriſt but theſe? Nor ſure need they bluſh to be found guilty of ſo profoundly learned inconſiſtencies, or to ſpeak abſurdly after ſuch Patrons. And what ſhould occaſion theſe men ſo to involve themſelves, I cannot find, or divine more than this, that they were not able to faſten upon any more tolerable ſenſe of the word ὁράσει 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. 1 *John* 3. 2. but taking that in its higheſt pitch of ſignificancy; all their arguments are generally levelled at this mark to prove that no created ſpecies can poſſibly repreſent God [*ſicuti eſt*] and thence infer that he cannot be ſeen by any created ſpecies in the glorified ſtate, where he is to be ſeen *ſicuti eſt*. But could we content our ſelves with a modeſt interpretation of theſe words, and underſtand them to ſpeak not of a *parity*, but of a *ſimilitude* only between Gods knowledge and ours, not of an abſolute *omnimodous ſimilitude*, but comparative only; that is, that comparing our *future* with our *preſent* ſtate, the *former* ſhall ſo far excell *this*, that, in compariſon thereof, it may be ſaid to be a knowing of God, *as we are known*, and *as he is*; inſomuch as our future knowledge of him, ſhall approach ſo unſpeakably nearer to his moſt perfect knowledge of us, and the truth of the thing, than our preſent knowledge doth or can; by ſuch an interpretation we are caſt upon no ſuch difficulties. For admit that no ſpecies can repreſent God *as he is*, in the higheſt ſenſe of theſe words, yet ſure, in the ſame ſenſe wherein he can be *ſeen* by us *as he is*, he may be *repreſented* to us *as he is*. And what can be more frivolous than that ſore-recited reaſoning to the contrary? "*There can be no created repreſentation of God*

excellency

" [*ficuti est*] *excellency of that brightness*; in its nature *it excelleth all things else*: in its present exhibition, compared with all its former radiations, *it excelleth it self.*

" *adequate to the Vision the blessed have of him; but they see more than any created representation can contain, for they see infinitum, thought infinite.* For how must we understand the *infinitum* they are said to see? Materially or formally?

*As to the nature of this glory*, 'tis nothing else but the conspicuous lustre of Divine perfections. We can only guide our present conceptions of it, by the discovery God hath already given us of himself, in those several excellencies of his Being, the great *Attributes* that are convertible and one with him. When *Moses* besought Him for a sight of his glory, he answers him with this, *I will proclaim my name before thee.* His Name, we know, is the collection of his Attributes.

must we understand by it him that is infinite only, or else as he is infinite? If it be said the *latter*, that is to say, they see *infinite* too; If the *former* only; Do not Saints on earth see, (viz. mentally which is the vision we are speaking of) him who is infinite, in their present state, where it is acknowledged their knowledge is by Species.

Yet would I not hence conclude, that the knowledge Saints shall have of God hereafter shall be by *Species*, for my design in all this is but to discover the vanity of too positive and definitive conceptions concerning it, beyond the measure of God's Revelation, and the ductures of clear and unintangled reason. All knowledge hath been thought to be by assimilation, *i. e.* by receiving the species or images of the things known. So the intellect is not really turned into the things which it understands but only receives their species wherewith it is united so closely that it is therefore said to be [like] to them. *Vertues of France Confer.* 65. One waie or other it hath been judged necessarie the mind should be furnished with such images of the thing it is said to understand; which therefore, some have thought *connate*, others, supplied by sense totallie; others, by a separate *Intellectus Agens*; which some have thought to be God himself: others one common Intelligence. Others a particular Genius so indispensably necessarie it hath been reckon'd unto intellection, that office should be performed by one or other. If any clearer explication can be given, or better way

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aſſigned of the ſouls knowing things, it cannot but be welcome to rational men. But I ſee no neceſſity or reaſon it ſhould have a ſpecifical diſtinct way of knowing here and in heaven. Much leſs that we ſhould imagine to our ſelves ſuch a one as to that other ſtate, as is altogether unaccountable and capable of no rational explication. And reckon it much more *becoming* to be ſilent, than on pretence of anie myſteriouſneſs in the things we diſcourſe of, to talk abſurdlie and unintelligiblie about them. A confeſſed ignorance in this caſe is *becoming* to ſay with that great Apoſtle, *It doth not appear what we ſhall be.* But to conclude and define ſuch matters is ſurely ἀμαθὲς καὶ ἀπρεπὲς.

The Notion therefore we can hence form of this glory, is only ſuch as we may have of a large volume by a brief Synopſis or Table; of a magnificent fabrick, by a ſmall Module or Platform, a ſpacious Countrey by a little Landskip. He hath here given us a *true* repreſentation of himſelf, not a *full*: ſuch as will ſecure our apprehenſions, being guided thereby, from *error* not from *ignorance*. So as they *ſwerve* not in apprehending this glory, though they ſtill *fall ſhort*. We can now apply our minds to contemplate the ſeveral perfections which the bleſſed God aſſumes to himſelf; and whereby he deſcribes to us his own Being: and can in our thoughts *attribute* them all to him, though we have ſtill but low defective conceptions of each one. As if we could at a diſtance, diſtinguiſh the Streets and Houſes of a great City; but every one appears to us much leſſe than it is: we can apprehend ſomewhat of whatſoever he reveals to be in himſelf, yet when all is done *how little a portion do we take up of him!* Our thoughts are empty and languid, ſtraight and narrow ſuch as diminiſh and limit the holy one: Yet ſo far as our

our apprehensions can correspond to the discovery he affords us of his several excellencies, we have a present view of the Divine glory. Do but strictly and distinctly survey the many perfections comprehended in his name, then gather them up and consider how glorious he is! Conceive *one glory* resulting from substantial wisdom, goodness, power, truth, justice, holiness; that is, beaming forth from him who is all these *by his very Essence, necessarily, originally, infinitely, eternally*; with whatsoever else is truly a perfection. This is the glory blessed Souls shall behold for ever.

2 Pet. 1. 17. *For the excellency of it*, 'tis called *by way of discrimination, the excellent glory*. There was glory put upon Christ in the transfiguration; of which, when the Apostle speaks, having occasion to mention, withal, *the glory of heaven it self*, from whence the voice came, he adds to this latter, the distinguishing note of *the excellent*: He himself was eye-witness of the honour, and majesty, and glory which the Lord Jesus then received; but beyond all this, the glory from whence the voice came, was the Μεγαλοπρεπὴς *excellent* or *stately* glory, as the word imports.

1 Pet. 4. 13. 'Tis a great intimation how *excellent* a glory this is, that 'tis said to be a glory *yet to be revealed*, as if it had been said, What ever appearances of the Divine glory are now offered to your view, there is still somewhat undiscovered, somewhat behind the Curtain that will out shine all. You have not seen so much, but you are still to expect unspeakably more.

Glory is then to shine in its Noon-day strength

ſtrength and vigour: 'Tis then in its Meridian. *Here*, the *riches of glory* are to be diſplayed, certain treaſures of glory, the plenitude and magnificence of glory. We are *here, to ſee him as he is*, to know him as we are known of him. Certainly, *the diſplay of himſelf*, the *rates* of his diſcovered excellency muſt hold proportion with that *Viſion*, and be therefore exceedingly glorious. *'Tis the glory Chriſt had with the Father before the foundations of the world were laid*; John 17. into the viſion and communion whereof, holy ſouls ſhall now be taken, according as their capacities can admit; that wherewithall his great atchievements, and high merits ſhall be rewarded eternally; that wherewith he is to be glorified in heaven, in compenſation of having glorified his Father on earth, and finiſhed the work whereto he was appointed. This cannot but be a moſt tranſcendent glory. 'Tis in ſum, and in the language of the Text, the glory of *Gods own face*, his moſt aſpectable, conſpicuous glory. Whoſe tranſforming beams are productive of the *glory impreſt*; the next ingredient into this bleſſedneſs, which will preſently come to be ſpoken of, after we have given you ſome ſhort account of

2. *The Act of beholding*: the *viſion* or *intuition* it ſelf, by which, intervening, the impreſſion is made.

*Glory* ſeems to carry in it a peculiar reſpect to the *viſive power* (whether corporal, or mental; as it is it ſelf of the one kind or the other) 'tis ſomething to be *contemplated*, to be lookt upon. And being to tranſmit an *impreſſion*,

*pression*, and consequent *pleasure* to another subject, it must necessarily be so, it can neither *transform*, nor *satisfie* but as it is beheld.

And here the *sensitive intuition*, I shall not insist on, as being less intended in the Text, and the discourse of it lesse suitable to such, as with a spiritual mind and design, set themselves to enquire into the nature of the Saints blessedness. Yet, as *this* is the most noble, comprehensive, quick, and sprightly *sense*, so is the *Act* of it more considerable, in the matter of blessedness, than any other of the outward man, and the most perfect imitation of the act of the mind, whence also *this* so often borrows the name of the *other*, and is called *seeing*. 'Tis an act indeed very proper and pertinent to a state of glory. By how much more any sensible object is glorious (supposing the *sensorium* to be duely disposed and fortified, as must be here supposed) so much is it the fitter object of *Sight*; hence when we would express a glorious object, we call it *conspicuum*, and the lesse glorious, or more obscure any thing is, the less visible, and approaches the nearer to invisibility, whence that saying in the common Philosophy, *To see blackness is to see nothing*.

*Arist. in 3. Meteorolog. Cap. de Iride.*

Whatsoever a glorified eye, repleni shed with a heavenly vitality and vigor, can fetch in from the many glorified objects that encompasse it, we must suppose to concurr to this blessedness. Now is the *eye satisfied with seeing*, which before never could.

But, 'tis intellectual sight we are chiefly to consider here, that whereby we see him that is invisible,

inviſible, and approach the *inacceſſible Light.* The word here uſed, ſome Criticks tell us, more uſually ſignifies the ſight of the mind. And *then*, not a caſual, ſuperficial glancing at a thing, but *contemplation*, a ſtudious, deſigned viewing of a thing, when we ſolemnly compoſe and aplly our ſelves thereto, or the viſion of Prophets or ſuch as have things diſcovered to them by divine Revelation (thence called *Chozim*, Seers) which imports (though not a previous deſign, yet) no leſſe intention of mind in the act it ſelf. חזה

And ſo it more fitly expreſſes that knowledge which we have, not by diſcourſe and reaſoning out of one thing from another, but by immediate intuition of what is nakedly, and at once offered to our view, which is the more proper knowledge of the bleſſed in heaven. They ſhall have the glory of God ſo preſented, and their minds ſo enlarged, as to comprehend much at one view, in which reſpect they may be ſaid, in a great degree, *to know as they are known*, in as much as the bleſſed God comprehends all things at once, in one ſimple act of knowing. Yet that is not to be underſtood as if the ſtate of glory ſhould exclude all *ratiocination*, more than our preſent ſtate doth all *intuition* (for firſt and indemonſtrable principles we ſee by their own light, without illation or argument) nor can it be inconvenient to admit, that while the knowledge the bleſſed have of God is not infinite, there may be uſe of their diſcurſive faculty with great fruit and pleaſure. Pure intuition of God, without any mixture

mixture of reaſoning, is acknowledged (by ſuch as are apt enough to be over-aſcribing to the creature) peculiar to God alone. But as the bleſſed God ſhall continually afford (if we may ſpeak of continuity in Eternity, which yet we cannot otherwiſe apprehend) a clear diſcovery of himſelf, ſo ſhall the principall exerciſe, and felicity of the bleſſed ſoul conſiſt in that leſs labouring and more pleaſant way of knowing: a meer admitting or entertaining of thoſe free beams of voluntary light, by a grateful intuition, which way of knowing the expreſſion of *ſight*, or *beholding* doth moſt incline to, and that is, we are ſure, the ordinary language of Scripture about this matter.

*Cognoſcere deum clarè & intuitivè eſt proprium & naturale ſoli deo ſicut eſt proprium igni calefacere & ſoli illuminare* Ledeſm. *de divin. perfect.* q. 8. Art. 7.

Mat. 5. 8. Heb. 12. 14.

## CHAP. IV.

*The ſecond ingredient into this Bleſſedneſs conſidered, aſſimilation to God or his glory impreſt. Wherein it conſiſts, diſcovered in ſundry Propoſitions. The third ingredient,* The ſatisfaction and pleaſure which reſults, *ſtated and opened.*

AND now, upon this Viſion of the bleſſed face of God, next follows, in the order of diſcourſe, The ſouls perfect aſſimilation unto that revealed glory, or its participation thereof, (touching the order the things themſelves have to one another, there will be conſideration had in its proper place)

place) and this also must be considered as a distinct and necessary ingredient into the state of blessedness we are treating of.

Distinct it is, for though the vision now spoken of, doth include a certain kind of assimilation in it, as all vision doth, being only a reception of the species or likeness of the Object seen: This assimilation we are to speak of, is of a very different kind. *That* is such as affects only the visive or cognitive power, and that not with a *real* change, but *intentional* onely, nor for longer continuance than the act of seeing lasts; but *this* is *total*, *real*, and *permanent*.

And surely it is of equal necessity to the souls blessedness, to *partake* the glory of God, as to *behold* it: as well to have the divine-likeness *impress* upon it as *represented* to it. After so contagious and over-spreading a depravation as sin hath diffus'd through all its powers: it can never be happy without a change of its very *crasis* and temper throughout. A diseased ulcerous body would take little felicity in gay and glorious sights: no more would all the glory of heaven signifie to a sick, deformed, self-loathing soul.

It must therefore be all glorious within, have the Divine nature more perfectly communicated, the likeness of God transfus'd and wrought into it. This is the blessed work begun in Regeneration; but how far it is from being perfected, we may soon find by considering how far short we are of being satisfied in our present state, even in the contemplati-

on of the higheſt and moſt excellent Objects. How taſteleſs to our ſouls are the thoughts of God! How little pleaſure do we take in viewing over his glorious Attributes! the moſt acknowledged and adorable excellencies of his Being! And whereto can we impute it but to this, that our ſpirits are not yet ſufficiently connaturallized to them? Their likeneſs is not enough deeply inſtamped on our ſouls; nor will this be, *till we awake*; when we ſee better, we ſhall become better: *When he appears we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is.*

But do we indeed pretend to ſuch an expectation? Can we think what God is, and what we are in our preſent ſtate, and not confeſſe theſe words to carry with them an amazing ſound, *we ſhall be like him!* How great an hope is this! How ſtrange an errand hath the Goſpel into the world! How admired a deſign! to transform men and make them like God! Were the duſt of the earth turned into ſtars in the firmament, were the moſt ſtupendous poetical transformations aſſured *realities*, what could equal the greatneſs and the wonder of this mighty change? Yea, and doth not the expectation of it ſeem as preſumptious, as the iſſue it ſelf would be ſtrange? Is it not an over bold deſire? too daring a thought? a thing *unlawful* to be *affected*, as it ſeems *impoſſible* to be *attained*?

It muſt be acknowledged there is an appearance of high arrogance in aſpiring to this, *to be like God*. And the very wiſh or thought of being

being so, *in all respects*, were not to be entermined without horror: 'Tis a matter therefore that requires some disquisition and explication wherein that impressed likeness of God consists, which must concur to the Saints blessedness. In order here unto then take the following Propositions.

1. *There is a sense wherein to be like God is altogether impossible, and the very desire of it the most horrid wickedness.* The prophet in the name of God charges the proud Prince of *Tyre* with this, as an inexpiable arrogance, that *he did set his heart as the heart of God*, and upon this score challenges and enters the lists with him: Come you, that would fain be taken for a God, Ile make a sorry God of thee e're I have done, *because thou hast set thy heart as the heart of God*, I'le set those upon thee, that shall draw their swords against the *beauty of thy wisdom, and that shall defile thy brightness*; And what? *Wilt thou yet say in the hand of him that slayeth thee I am a God? Thou shalt be a man and no God in the hand of him that slayeth thee, — I have spoken it saith the Lord God.* He will endure no such imitation of him, as to be rival'd in the point of his *Godhead*. This is the matter of his jealousie. *They have moved me to jealousie with not-God.* (so 'tis shortly and more smartly spoken in the Original Text) And see how he displayes his threats and terrours hereupon in the following verses. This was the *design* and *inducement* of the first transgression *to be as Gods*. And indeed all sin may be reduced hither, what else is sin

*Proposition* 1.

verse 6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

Deut. 32. 21.

(in the moſt comprehenſive notion) but an *undue imitation of God?* an exalting of the *Creatures Will* into a ſupreamacy; and oppoſing it as ſuch to the *divine*. *To ſin*, is to take upon us, as if we were ſupream, and *that there were no Lord over us*, 'Tis to aſſume to our ſelves a Deity, as if we were under no law or rule, as he is not under any, but what he is to himſelf, herein, to be like God, is the very core, and malignity of ſin.

2. 2. *There is a juſt and laudable imitation of God*, a likeneſſe to him, that is matter of *command*, *praiſe*, and *promiſe*, as wherein both the *duty*, *excellency* and *bleſſedneſſe* of the reaſonable creature doth conſiſt; and which is in ſome reſpect inſeperable from the nature of man. We are *required* to be followers of God, as dear Children (imitaters the word is) *David* is commended *as a man after Gods own heart* (though but now we ſaw, in another, with what diſdain and indignation it was reſented, that he did ſet his heart, as the heart of *God*.) The *new Creature*, the *new Man*, the firſt fruits, (as he is called) the flower of the Creation is made after God. Saints expect upon the aſſurance of his word, to be more fully *like him*, as we ſee in the text, and parallel places. Yea man was made at firſt with a concreate ſimilitude to God, which we know was the counſel of Heaven, and the reſult and iſſue of that counſel. *Gen.* 1. 26, 27. This is evident enough in it ſelf, and needs no more words. But to make a further ſtep in this buſineſſe, obſerve next.

Eph. 5. 1. μιμηταὶ.

Jam. 1. 18. Eph. 4. 24.

3. *That*

3. *There can be no allowable imitation of any one, but with an exception, as to ſome peculiarities, that may belong to his ſpecial ſtation, relations, and other circumſtances of the condition in which he is, or with limitation to ſuch things as are of common concernment unto both.* 'Tis commonly obſerved how naturally a people form their manners and faſhions to the example of the Prince; and there is no well diſpoſed ruler, but would take it well to be imitated in things that are of common concernment to him and his ſubjects, that is, that concern him, *not as he is a King*; but *as he is a man*, or a *Chriſtian*. To behold the tranſforming power of his own example; where it is ſuch as begets a fair and unreproachful impreſs*; how *his virtues* circulate (his juſtice, temperance, love of religion) and produce their likeneſs among his people twill be a glory, and cannot but be reſented with ſome *delight*. We caſt an *honor* upon them whom we imitate: for we acknowledg an *excellency* in them (which is all that honoring imports in the firſt notion of it) and that *naturally* is received with pleaſure. But now ſhould ſubjects aſpire to a *likeneſs* to their Prince, in the proper appendages, and acts of *ſoveraignty*; and becauſe he is a glorious King, they will be ſuch too: and aſſume the peculiar cogniſances of *regality*; aſcend the Throne, ſway the Scepter, wear the Crown, enact Lawes, &c. There cannot be more of *dutifulneſſe* and *obſervance*, in the *former* imitation; than there is of *diſloyalty*, and *treaſon*

3.

*Regis ad exemplum totus componitur orbis.*

*Nam facere reſtè bonus princeps faciendo docet. Camque ſit imperio maximus, exemplo major eſt.* Velleius Paterculus. Rom. Hiſt. l. 2.

treason in this. A Father is pleased to have his Son imitate him, within such limits beforementioned; but, if he will govern the Family, and fill up his room in all relations, this will never be indured.

4. 4. *There are some things to be found in the blessed God, not so incommunicable, and appropriate; but that his Creatures may be said to have some participation thereof with him: and so far to be truely like him.* This participation cannot be *univocal*; as the nature of a living creature in general, is equaly in *Men* and *Brutes*. So it is a self evident principle, that *Nothing can be common to God and an inferiour being*. Nor is it onely *equivocal*; a participation but of the same name, when the natures signified thereby are, *altogether* diverse; but *analogical*, in as much as the things spoken under the same names of God and the creature, have a *real likenesse*, and *conveniency in nature* with one another; and they are in God, *primarily*; in the creature, by *dependance*, and *derivation*: in *him*, *essentially*, as being his very *Essence*: in *them*, but as *accidents*, (many of them) adventitious to their beings: and so while they cannot be said to be the *same* things in *them*, as, in him, are fitly said to be his *likeness*.

*Inter Deum & creaturam nihil est commune.*

5. 5. *This likenesse, as it is principally found in man among all the terrestrial creatures; so hath it man for its seat and subject, his Soul or spiritual part.* The effects of divine wisdom power, goodnesse, are every where visible, throughout the whole Creation; and as there is no effect,

effect, but hath some thing in it, corresponding to its cause (wherein it was its cause) so, every creature doth, some way or other, represent God. Some in virtues, some in life, some in being * only, the *material world*, represents him as an *house*, the *builder*. But spiritual beings, as a *child*, the *father*†. *Other* Creatures (as one * fitly expresses it) carrie his *footsteps*; *these*, his *image*: & that, *not as drawn with a pencil*, which can onely express *figure and colour*: but, as *represented in a glasse*, which intimates *action and motion*. To give the preheminence therefore † in this point to the body of man, was a conceit, so gross, that one would wonder how it should obtain; at least in the Christian world.

* *Multis enim modis dici res possunt similes Deo, alia secundum virtutem, & sapientiam, facta; quia in ipso est virtus & sapientia non facta; alia in quantum solùm vivunt, quia ille summe & primè vivit; alia, in quantum sunt, quia ille summe & primitus est*, Aug. 83. quæst. p (mihi) 211.

† τὸν γὰρ τοιοῦτον. * P. *Moulinus de cognitione Dei.* † Heathens have disdained and declaimed against so unworthy thoughts of God. Τὸ ἢ θεῖον ἀνθ' ἑαυτοῦ ἀφιστᾶσι, ἄγαλμα ποιεῖ, ἄνθρακ' ἀνάκλα, &c. *Maximus Tyr. Dissert.* 1.

The same Author warns us to take heed, that we ascribe to God, Μὴ μόχθον, μὴ χρῆμα, μὴ χρῖμα, μὴ ἄλλο ὅλως πάθος, Ibid.

Unto which purpose is that decantate Distich of *Homer* Οὐ χρὴ σῖτον, &c. And that saying of *Pliny*, *Quapropter effigiem Dei formamque quærere inhabilitatis humanæ rabor*, applied by *Zanch. de operibus Dei.* And we may see much of like import alledg'd by *Natal. Com. lib.* 1. *p.* 13 Which (by the way) discovers how flatly opposite the Idolatrie forbidden in the second commandment is to the light of Nature it self. Which hath been also the just Apologie of the Ancient patrons of the Christian cause for the simplicitie of their worship in this respect: and their not imitating the pompous vanitie of Pagan Image worship. Οὐδὲ θύειν ἐπιτρέπομεν ὑπολαμβάνοντες οὕτω τὸ ἀγάλματος, ἕτερ μᾶλλον ἀναγκαῖον θεῷ ἢ ἀναιμάκτου καὶ ἀθυμιάτου, *Origen. contr. Celsum. lib.* 7.

To which purpose see at large *Min. Felix*, *Quod simulacrum Deo fingam? &c.*

And surely 'tis as improvable against the same piece of Christian

Paganism. The usually assigned differences would easily be shewn to be trifling impertinencies.

*Corpus hominis non animam esse imaginem Dei*, Aug. (if it be *Augustines*) lib. de hæresibus.

Yet we find it expressely charged by Saint *Augustine* upon the *Antropomorphites* of old (or *Melitonians*, as he calls them, from one *Melito* the Father of them) not onely, that they imagined God in a humane shape (which was their known conceit) but that they stated Gods image in Man, in his *body*, not his *soul*.

See Dr *Charleton* of his Image of God in man.

Nor are *Van Helmonts* phansies, about corporal likeness capable of excuse by any thing, but that they were a *dream* (as they are fitly stil'd) and not likely to impose upon the waking reason of any man.

6. *This image or likeness of God in the Spirit of Man, representing what is communicable in him, is either Natural or Moral.* There is *first*, a *natural image of God*, in the soul of man, which is inseperable from it; and which it can never divest it self of *. *Its* very spiritual immortal nature, it self, is a representation of *his*. Its intellective and elective powers are the image of what we are constrained to conceive under the notion of the same powers in him. Yea, the same *understanding*, with the *memory*, and *will*, in one soul are thought a lively resemblance of the *Triune* Deity. But there is further a similitude of him in respect of *moral* * virtues or perfections answering to what we conceive in him, under *that notion*. His *wisedom*, (so far as it hath the nature of a moral virtue) his *mercy*, *truth*, *righteousness*, *holiness*, &c. These two kinds or parts (as they

* *Est Dei similitudo quædam, quam nemo videas, nisi cum vitâ exuit; quam habet homo & volens, & nolens, &c.* Bernard. de vitâ Solitar.

† D. Aug. (*suæ*) lib. 10. de Trinitat.

* *Sed est alia, magis Deo propinqua, similitudo quæ in virtutibus consistit*, Bernard.

hey may be called ) of the divine impreſſe
pon the Spirits of men, are diſtinguiſht by
ome ( I ſee not how properly ) by the di-
tinct names of *Image*, denoting the *former*:
nd *ſimilitude*, the latter : anſwering, as is
thought, to two Hebrew words of the like
import *: but the things themſelves are evi- צלם* דמות
dently enough diſtinct, *viz.* what perfects the *Zanch.*
nature of man, *in genere phyſico*, as he is ſuch
a particular being in the Univerſe : and what
perfects him, *in genere morali*, as he is conſi-
derable in reference to a *Law or rule* guiding
him to *bleſſedneſſe* : *as his end.*

7. *'Tis a likeneſſe to God in reſpect of thoſe* 7.
*moral excellencies or perfections, that is eſpecial-*
*ly, conſiderable by us, in reference to our preſent*
*purpoſe ; as more immediately relating to the*
*ſoul's bleſſedneſſe in God.* By the former it hath
a *potentiality*, by the latter an *habitude* in refe-
rence thereunto. Or ( to uſe termes, more
liable to common apprehenſion) by the *former*
it hath a *remoter capacity*, by the latter a *preſent*
*fitneſſe* ; or, as the Apoſtle expreſſes it, is
*made meet* to be partaker of the inheritance
of the Saints in Light ( i. e. *conſidering* this
*likeneſſe*, as begun in the ſoul.)

8. *Beſides what is thus* ( *in the ſenſe before* 8.
*expreſt* ) *communicable between God and man,*
*there are ſome things ſo peculiarly appropriate to*
*God, as that, in reſpect of them, there can be*
*no formal likeneſſe in the creature : and it would*
*be impious boldneſs to aſpire thereto.* Many things
of this kind might be mentioned ; I ſhall on-
ly inſtance in two, wherein there is a mani-
feſt

feſt competition of the Apoſtate world with him; and which are therefore more *relative* to practice. His *Soveraign authority, and his Independency.* In theſe while men *affect to imitate* they wickedly *affront* him. And here is the great controverſie between the glorious God, and the degenerous Children of Men. Every man would catch at a God-head, and either aſſume it to himſelf, or caſt it, many times upon other creatures, viler and more ignoble than himſelf. Snatch the reins of Government out of Gods hand; and exalt their own wills into an abſoluteneſs as liable to controul from none; place and ſettle their dependence on their own wit, power, fortitude, induſtry; or, if that be a more hopeleſs courſe (for they often find an entire God-head too much for one creature, and are therefore conſtrained to parcell it out among many) place their confidences, and expectations in ſomething elſe without them: do, often, that ridiculous thing, ſo worthy to be hooted at, make the congeſted dirt of the earth their truſt (the righteous ſhall laugh at him, and ſay, Lo! this is the man that truſted in riches) their wealth, their ſtrong Tower; which onely the name of the Lord is to his Righteous ones. Yet, all the while, ſelf is the center, and end in which all muſt meet, and terminate. This at laſt carries away the aſſumed fictitious Deity. And this thing, that is thus now made *like God*, is an *Idol* (which indeed ſignifies ſo much) and this imitation of him wicked Idolatry, than which nothing more

Pſal. 52.6,7.

more debases a reasonable soul, or devests man of himself, that till they redress this they give no proof of their being men. Isa. 46. 8.

This *assimilation* of our selves to God is very remote then from being a perfection; it is a most reproachfull deformity, as we know imitations, if they be visibly affected, and strained too far, are alwayes thought ridiculous by Wise men.

9. *Though, in respect of these incommunicable things, there cannot be a proper, formal, immediate similitude to God: Yet, there ought to be a correspondency which must be measured, and estimated by the consideration of his state, and ours; whence it will appear, that what so properly appertains to him, and what ought to correspond thereto in us, do agree to each; upon one and the same intervening reason.* 9.

For instance, is he *absolutely Supream*, in as much as he is the first Being? the correspondent impression with us, and upon the same reason, must be a most profound, humble self-subjection, disposing our souls to constant obedience to him. Again, is he *simply independent*, as being self-sufficient and *all in all*? the impression with us must be *a nothingness*, and self-emptiness, ingaging us to quit our selves, and live in him.

This is the only conformity to God, which, *with respect to his incommunicable excellencies*, our creature state can admit; It may be also stil'd *a likeness to him*, being a real conformity to his Will concerning us: and his very nature as it respects us. We may conceive of it,

as

as of the likeness between a Seal, and the stamp made by it: Especially, supposing the inequality of parts in the Seal, to be by the *protuberancy* of what must form the signature. In that case there would be a likeness, *aliquatenus*, that is, an exact correspondency, but what would then be *convexe* or bulching out in the Seal, would be, as we know, *concave*, or *hollow* in the impression. Such is the proportion between *Soveraignty* and *Subjection*, between self-fulness and self-emptiness. Whereas *a similitude to God, in respect of his communicable perfections*, is as that between the *face* and its *picture*; where no such difference is wont to appear.

10. 10. *Assimilation, or conformity to God in both these respects composes that excellent frame of moral perfection, which the divine glory, beheld, impresses upon the soul; and which immediately conduces to its satisfaction and blessedness.* I say, *moral perfection*, because that only is capable of being impresst by the intervening ministry of our own understanding: *viz.* by its Vision, intimated, as was formerly observed, in that of the Apostle, *We shall be like——for we shall see him, &c.* Its *natural perfections* are antecedent, and presupposed, therefore not so fitly to be understood here. And I say, *both these wayes*, for, as we cannot form an intire *Idea* of God, without taking in, together, his perfections of both sorts, *communicable*, and *incommunicable*, (the former whereof must serve instead of a *genus*; the latter of a *differentia*, in composing the notion of God *) so nor will his impresse on us be intire, without something in it respecting

*Turs. Salmu. de Deo immenso.*

ſetting both; in the ſenſes already given. What it will contribute to *future bleſſedneſs*, we ſhall ſhortly ſee, in its place, when we have made a brief enquiry (which is the next thing, according to our order propoſed) concerning.

3. Thirdly, *The ſatisfaction that ſhall hence accrue.* Where it will not be beſides our purpoſe, to take ſome notice of the ſignificancy of the word. And not to inſiſt on its affinity to the word uſed for ſwearing, or rather, being ſworn * (which; an oath, being the end of controverſies, and beyond which we go no further nor expect more, in way of teſtifying; would, the more fitly here repreſent to us the ſoul in its *non ultra*; having attained the end of all its motions, and contentions) Its equal nearneſs to the word ſignifying the number of *ſeven*, is not altogether unworthy obſervation. That number is, we know, often uſed in Scripture as denoting *plenitude* and *perfection*; and God hath, as it were, ſigmatiz'd it, by his reſt on the *ſeventh* day † and if this were not deſignedly pointed at here in the preſent uſe of this word (as it muſt be acknowledged to be frequently uſed where we have no reaſon to think it is with ſuch an intendment) It may yet occaſion us to look upon the holy ſoul now entered into the eternal Sabbath * the reſt of God: which, (ſecluding all reſpect to that

3.

שִׁבְעָ

* Which ſome think to be the Niphal of the ſame word notwithſtanding the different punctation of the ש.

† How fit a Symbol it is of God's Sabbatiq; reſt, ſee Dr. *Moris*'s defence of his Philoſophical Sabbata from *Philo Judæus*.

* *Erit ibi vere maximum Sabbatum, non habens veſperam, quod commendavit Dominus in primis operibus mundi, ut legitur & requievit die Septimo—— Dies enim Septimus etiam nos ipſi erimus quando ipſius fuerimus benedictionum & ſanctificationum plenì atque refecti—ibi vacabimus & videbimus, videbimus & amabimus amabimus & laudabimus,* &c. *Aug. de civit. Dei l.* 22. *c.* 30. *vid. eund. de civit. Dei l.* 17. *c.* 4.

circum-

circumstance) is yet the very substance and true notion of the thing it self (to the consideration whereof I now passe) under the word held forth to us.

For this *satisfaction* is the *souls rest in God. Its perfect enjoyment* of the *most perfect good.* The expletion of the whole capacity of its will; the total filling up of that vast enlarged appetite; the perfecting of all its *desires* in *delight* and *joy.* Now delight or joy (for they differ not, save that the latter word is thought something more appropriate to reasonable nature) is more fitly defined *the rest of the desiring faculty in the thing desired**. Desire, and Delight are but two acts of *Love*, diversified, only, by the distance, or presence of the same Object; which, when 'tis distant, the soul, acted and prompted by love, desires, moves towards it, pursues it; when present, and attained, delights in it, enjoyes it, staies upon it, satisfies it self in it (according to the measure of goodness it finds there) *Desire*, is therefore, *love in motion*; *Delight*, is *love in rest*: and of this latter *delight* or *joy*, Scripture evidently gives us this Notion, *Zeph.* 3. 17. *He will rejoyce over thee with joy*, (unto which is presently added as exegetical) *he will rest in his love*: Which, *resting* can be but the same thing with *being satisfied.*

* *Quies appetitus in appetibili Aquin. Sum.*

*This satisfaction then is nothing else but the repose and rest of the soul amidst infinite delights.* Its peaceful acquiescence, having attained the ultimate tearm of all its motions, beyond which it cares to go no further; the solace it finds in an adequate full good; which it accounts

counts enough for it, and beyond which, it deſires no more; reckons its ſtate as good as it can be, and is void of all hovering thoughts (which perfect reſt muſt needs exclude) or inclination to change.

And ſo doth this *being ſatisfied*, not only generally, ſignifie the ſoul to be at *reſt*; but it ſpecifies that *reſt*; and gives us a diſtinct account of the nature of it. As that it is not a *forced violent reſt*; ſuch as proceeds from a beguiled ignorance, a drowſie ſloth, a languiſhing weakneſs, or a deſire and hope of happineſs, by often fruſtrations baſſed into *deſpair*. (to all which, the native import and propriety of that word [*ſatisfaction*] doth ſtrongly repugne.)

But it diſcovers it to be a *natural reſt*. I mean, *from an internal principle*; the ſoul is not held in its preſent ſtate of enjoyment by a ſtrong and violent hand; but reſts in it by a connaturalneſs thereunto, is attempered to it, by its own inward conſtitution and frame. It reſts not as a deſcending ſtone, intercepted by ſomething by the way, that holds and ſtops it, elſe it would fall further; but as a thing would reſt in its own centre, with ſuch a reſt as the earth is ſuppoſed to have in its proper place; that, being hung upon nothing, is yet unmoved (*ponderibus librata ſuis*) equally ballanced by its own weights every way.

It is a *rational judicious reſt*, upon certain knowledge that its preſent ſtate is ſimply *beſt*, and not capable of being changed for a *better*: The ſoul cannot be held under a perpetual cheat,

cheat, so as alwayes to be satisfied with a shadow. It may be so befool'd for a while, but if it remain satisfied, in a state that never admits of change; that state must be such as commends it self to the most throughly informed reason and judgement.

It is hence a *free voluntary chosen rest*: Such as God professes his own to be in *Zion*. *This is* Psal. 132. 14. *my rest, here will I dwell, for I have desired it.*

It is a *complacential rest*, wherein the soul abides steady *bound* only by the cords of love; a rest in the midst of *pleasantnesses*; *The Lord is* Psal. 16. 6. *my portion, the lots are fallen to me* [*in amœnitatibus*] it cannot be more fitly expresst than [amidst pleasantnesses] And this speaks, not only what the Psalmists condition was, but the *sense*, and *account* he had of it. That temper of mind gives us some *Idea* of that *contentful, satisfied* abode with God, which the blessed shall have. He intimates how undesirous he was of any change. *Their sorrows* (he told us above) *should be multiplied that hasten after* Ver. 4. *another God.* Hereafter there will be infinitely less *appearance of reason* for any such thought. Now it is the sense of an holy soul, *Whom have I in heaven but thee, and there is none I desire on earth besides thee* (q. d. Heaven and Earth yield not a tempting Object, to divert me from thee) 'tis *now*, so at sometimes, when faith and love are in their triumph and exaltation (but the Lord knows how seldom!) but much more *when we see him as he is*, and are *satisfied with his likeness.*

*It's an active vigorous rest.* Action *about* the end

end ſhall be perpetuated, here, though action *towards* it ceaſes. 'Tis the reſt of an *awakned*, not of a *drowſie, ſluggiſh* ſoul; of a ſoul *ſatisfi'd*, by heavenly *ſenſations* and *fruitions*: not uncapable of them; or that hath its powers bound up by a ſtupifying ſleep.

Its the reſt of *hope* perfected in *fruition*, not loſt in *deſpair*; of *ſatisfied*, not *defeated* expectation. Deſpair may occaſion reſt to a mans *body*, but not to his *mind*; or a ceſſation from *further endeavours*, when they are conſtantly found vain, but not from *trouble and diſquiet*. It may *ſuſpend from action*, but never *ſatisfie*.

This ſatisfaction therefore ſpeaks both the *realitie* and *nature* of the ſouls reſt in glory: *that* it reſts; and with *what kind* of reſt.

I think not worth the while to ingage in the diſpute (ſo much agitated between the *Thomiſts* and *Scotiſts*) whether bleſſedneſs do formally conſiſt in this ſatisfying fruition, or in the antecedent viſion: This ſatisfaction is certainly inſeparable from it, and I ſee not how to be excluded out of its formal Notion, 'tis not *viſion* as *viſion*, but as *ſatisfying*, that makes us happy; and to talk of the ſatisfaction or pleaſure which the *underſtanding* hath in *knowing*, is inſipid: while the *ſoul underſtanding*, i. e. *the mind*, *knows* 'tis the ſoul enjoying, *i. e.* the *will* is pleaſed and finds content, and till the ſoul be fully *contented*, it is not bleſſed, and it *is*, by being ſo, when it ſaith, now am I full-ſatisfied, I have enough, I deſire no more.

## CHAP. V.

*The relative conſideration of theſe three ingredients of the Saints bleſſedneſs. Where it is propounded to ſhew particularly.* 1. *What relation* Viſion *hath to* Aſſimilation. 2. *What both theſe have to* Satisfaction. *The relation between the two former inquired into; an entrance upon the much larger Diſcourſe, what relation and influence the two former have towards the third. What Viſion of Gods Face, or glory contributes towards Satisfaction, Eſtimated from the conſideration.* 1. *Of the Object,* the glory to be beheld, *as 'tis* divine, entire, permanent, appropriate.

THUS far have we view'd the parts or neceſſary concurrents of which the bleſſedneſs of the Saints muſt be compoſed *abſolutely*, and *ſeverally* each from other. We proceed

Secondly, to conſider them *relatively*, viz. in the *mutual reſpects*, they bear one to another; as they actually compoſe this bleſſed ſtate, wherein we ſhall ſhew particularly,

1. The relation (by way of influence, and dependence) between *Viſion* and *Aſſimilation*.

2. Between both theſe and the *ſatisfaction* that inſues: Which latter I intend more to dwell

dwell upon; and only to touch the former, as a more ſpeculative and leſſe improvable ſubject of Diſcourſe, in my way to this.)

1. Firſt, It may be conſidered, what relation there may be *between viſion of God*, and aſſimilation, or *being made like to him*; and it muſt be acknowledged (according to what is commonly obſerved of the *mutual action* of the *underſtanding* and *will*) that the *ſight of God*, and *likeneſs to him*, do *mutually* contribute, each towards other. The ſight of God aſſimilates, makes the ſoul like unto him; that likeneſs more diſpoſes it for a continued renewed viſion. It could never have attained the beatifical viſion of God, had it not been prepared thereto by a gradual previous likeneſs to him *. For righteouſneſs (which we have ſhewn qualifies for this bleſſedneſs) conſiſts in a likeneſs to God; and it could never have been ſo *prepared*, had not ſome knowledge of God introduced that conformity and yielding bent of heart towards him. For the entire frame of the *new man*, † *made after the image of God, is renewed in knowledge.*

But as notwithſtanding the circular action of the underſtanding and will upon one another; there muſt be a beginning of this courſe ſome-where, and the underſtanding is uſually reckon'd the ἡγεμονικὸν, the firſt mover, the leading faculty: So notwithſtanding the mutual influence of theſe two upon each other, *ſeeing* hath a natural precedency and muſt lead the way unto *being like*; Which is ſufficiently intimated in the Text, [*I ſhall behold thy face*] and

* Which neceſſity of a likeneſs to God to diſpoſe for the viſion of him, is excellently expreſt by a *Platonique* Philoſopher. The divine nature, the τὸ θεῖον, which he ſaith is like to no ſenſe, (μόνῳ δ' τῷ τῆς ψυχῆς ὀφθαλμῷ ἡ καθαρσίου, ἢ παρουσίᾳ, ἢ καθορᾶται ἢ συμφυὲς, ἴσαν ἀλλήλοις, &c.) is yet viſible to that in the ſoul which is moſt beautiful, moſt pure, moſt perſpicacious, moſt ſublime, moſt noble, in reſpect of a certain ſimilitude and cognation that is between them. *Max. Tyr.*

† Col. 3. 10.

and then *I ſhall be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs*, and more fully in that parallel Scripture: *We ſhall be like him for we ſhall ſee him, &c.*

From whence alſo, and from the very nature of the thing, we may fitly ſtate the relation of the firſt of theſe to the ſecond, to be that of a cauſe to its effect. *Sight* begets *likeneſs*, is *antecedent* to it, and *productive* of it.

That is *the face or glory of God ſeen*; that *glory*, in conjunction with our *viſion of it*: for the viſion operates not; but according to the efficaciouſneſs of the thing ſeen, nor can that glory have any ſuch operation, but by the intervention of viſion.

Tis therefore the *glory of God ſeen*, as ſeen, that aſſimilates, and impreſſes its likeneſs upon the beholding Soul: and ſo its cauſality it is that of an *objective cauſe* (which whether it belong to the efficient or final, I ſhall not here diſpute) that *operates* onely as *it is apprehended*: ſo introducing its own form, and ſimilitude into the ſubject it works upon. Such a kind of cauſe were *Jacobs* ſtreaked rods of the productions that enſued; and ſuch a cauſe is any thing whatever that begets an impreſſion upon an apprehenſive ſubject by the mediation and miniſtry, whether of the phancy or underſtanding. This kind of cauſality the word hath in its renewing transforming work; and the Sacraments wherein they are *cauſal* of *real phyſical* mutations on the Subjects of them. So much of the Image of God as is here impreſt upon ſouls by Goſpel diſpenſations,

ſations, ſo much is impreſt of his glory. The work of grace is glory begun.

And now as glory *initial*, and *progreſſive* in this life enters at the eye -- (beholding as in a glaſſe the glory of the Lord, we are changed) ſo doth perfect, and conſumate glory in the other life. For we have no reaſon to imagine to our ſelves any alteration in the natural order the powers of the ſoul have towards each other, by its paſſing into a ſtate of glory. 2 Cor. 3. 18.

The *Object* ſeen is unſpeakably *efficacious*; the *Act* of intuition is *full of lively vigour*, the *Subject* was prepared, and in a diſpoſition before; and what ſhould hinder, but this glorious effect ſhould immediately enſue; as the Sun no ſooner puts up its head above the Hemiſphere, but all the vaſt ſpace whether it can diffuſe its beams is preſently transformed into its likeneſſe, and turned into a Region of light.

What more can be wanting to cauſe all the darkneſs of Atheiſm, carnality, and every ſting of ſin, for ever to vaniſh out of the awaking ſoul, and an intire frame of holineſs to ſucceed, but one ſuch transforming ſight of the face of God? one ſight of his glorious *Majeſty* preſently *ſubdues*, and works it to a full ſubjection; one ſight of his *purity* makes *it pure*: one ſight of his *lovelineſſe* turns it into *love*, and ſuch a ſight alwayes remaining the impreſs remains alwayes actually (beſides that it is in it ſelf moſt habitual and permament in the ſouls now confirmed ſtate) freſh and lively.

The *Object* hath quite another aſpect upon a wicked ſoul, when it awakes, and the *act* of ſeeing is of another kind; therefore no ſuch *effect* follows: beſides the *ſubject* is otherwiſe diſpoſed, and therefore as the Sun inlightens not the inward parts of an impervious dung-hill, but it inlightens air, ſo the ſight of God tranſforms and aſſimilates at laſt, not a wicked, but it doth a godly ſoul. That which here makes the greateſt difference in the temper of the ſubject is Love. I look upon the face of a *ſtranger*, and it *moves* me not, but upon a *friend*, and his face preſently *transforms* mine into a lively, cheerful aſpect. (*As iron ſharpens iron, ſo doth the face of a man his friend*) puts a ſharpneſs and a quickneſs into his looks. The ſoul that loves God opens it ſelf to him, admits his influences and impreſſions, is eaſily moulded, and wrought to his will; yeilds to the tranſforming power of his appearing glory: There is no reliſtent principle remaining, when the love of God is perfected in it, and ſo overcoming is the firſt ſight of his glory upon the awaking ſoul, that it perfects it, and ſo his likeneſſe both at once.

Prov. 27. 17.

But enmity fortifies the ſoul againſt him, as with bars and doors; averts it from him; carries with it an horrid guilty conſciouſneſs, which fils it with eternal *deſpair* and *rage*, and enraps it in the blackneſs of darkneſſe for ever.

2. Both the *viſion* of God, and *likeneſs* to him muſt be conſidered in their *relation* to the conſequent *ſatisfaction*, and the influence, they have in order thereto. I ſay both; for

for though this ſatisfaction be not expreſſely, and directly referred by the letter of the text, to the ſight of Gods face, yet its relation thereto, in *the nature of the thing*, is ſufficiently apprehenſible and obvious, both *mediate*, in reſpect of the influence it hath towards the ſatisfying aſſimilation, and *immediate* (which we are now to conſider) as it is ſo highly pleaſurable in it ſelf: and is plainly enough intimated *in the text*, being applied in the ſame breath to a thing ſo immediately, and intimately conjunct with this viſion, as we find it is. Moreover, ſuppoſing that [*likeneſs*] here do (as it hath been granted it may) ſignifie *objective* glory alſo as well as *ſubjective*, and repeat what is contained in the former expreſſion [*the face of God*] the reference ſatisfaction hath to this viſion (which the remention of its object, though under a varied form of expreſſion ſuppoſes) will be more expreſſe: therefore we ſhall ſhew.

1. What the viſion of the divine glory contributes to the ſatisfaction of the bleſſed ſoul: and what felicity it muſt needs take herein, which cannot, but be very great whether we reſpect.

The glory ſeen, the object of this viſion, or,
The act of viſion, or, intuition it ſelf.

1. The *Object*, the glory beheld: what a ſpring of pleaſure is here? what rivers of pleaſure flow hence? *In thy preſence* (ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*) *is fulneſſe of joy: at thy right hand are pleaſures for evermore*, The awaking ſoul, *Pſal.* 16. 11.

having now past the path of life (drawn through *Sheol* it self, the state of deadlyhead) appears immediately in this *presence*: and what makes this *presence so joyous*, but the pleasant brightness of this face? to be *in the presence* of any one, and *before his face* (*in conspectu*) are equivalent expressions: therefore the Apostle quoting this passage, renders it thus, *Thou hast filled me with gladness, by thy* [*countenance.*] Now in this glorious presence or within view of the face of God is [fulness] of joy, *i. e.* joy unto *satisfaction*. And the Apostle *Jude* speaking of *this presence* under this name [*a presence of glory*] tels us of an *exceeding joy*, a jubilation (an ἀγαλλίασις) that shall attend the presentment of Saints there. The holy Soul *now* enters the divine *Shechinah*, the Chamber of presence of the great King, the *habitation of his holiness and glory. The place where his honour dwelleth.* Here his glory surrounds it with incircling beams: 'tis *beset* with *glory*, therefore surely also *fill'd* with *joy*. When the vail is drawn aside: or we are *within the vail*, in that very *presence whither Jesus the forerunner is for us entred* (through that path of life) O the satisfying overcoming pleasure of this sight! Now, that it is to us *revealed* or unvailed glory, which was *hidden* before. Here the *glory set in Majesty* (as the expression is, concerning the glory of the Temple) is presented to view openly and without umbrage. God is now no longer seen through an obscuring medium. They are not now shadowed glimmerings, transient, oblique glances, but the

*Act.* 2. 28 which indeed is the Seventies reading of the Psalmists word.

καρδίαν τὸ ὄψει, ver. 24.

Ezek. 7.

the direct beams of full ey'd glory that ſhine upon us. The diſcovery of this glory is the ultimate product of that infinite *wiſedom* and *love*, that have been working from *eternity*, and for ſo many thouſand years through all the ſucceſſions of time towards the heirs of ſalvation. The laſt and compleat iſſue of the great atchievments, ſharp conflicts, glorious victories, high merits of our mighty Redeemer. All theſe erid in the opening of Heaven (the laying of this glory as it were common) to all believers. This is the upſhot, and cloſe of that great deſign: will it not (think ye) be a ſatisfying glory! The full bleſſedneſs of the redeemed is the Redeemers reward. He cannot be *ſatisfied* in ſeeing his ſeed if they ſhould be *unſatisfied*. He cannot behold them with content if his heart tell him not that he hath done well enough for them. God would even be Heb. 11. 16. aſhamed to be called their God, had he not made proviſion for their entertainment worthy of a God. Tis the ſeaſon of Chriſts Triumphs, and Saints are to enter into *His* joy. Tis the appointed jubilee at the finiſhing of all Gods works, from the Creation of the world, when he ſhall pupoſely ſhew himſelf in his moſt adorable Majeſty, and when Chriſt ſhall appear in his own likeneſſe (he appeared in another likeneſs before) ſurely glory muſt be in in its exaltation in that day. But take a more diſtinct account, how grateful a ſight this glory will be in theſe following particulars.

1. It is the *Divine* glory. Let your hearts 1. dwell

dwell a little upon this consideration. 'Tis the *glory of God*, i. e. the glory which the blessed God both enjoyes and affords, which he contemplates in himself, and which raies from him to his Saints, 'tis the felicity of the *divine Being*. It satisfies a Deity, will it not a worm? 'Tis a glory that results and shines from him and in that sense also divine (which here I mainly intend) the beauty of his own face the lustre of Divine perfections, every Attribute bears a part, all concur to make up this glory.

And here pretermitting those which are lesse liable to our apprehention; his Eternity, Immensity, Simplicity, &c. (of which, not having their like in us, we are the more uncapable to form distinct conceptions, and consequently of perceiving the pleasure, that we may hereafter upon the removal of other impediments, find in the contemplation of them) let us bethink our selves how admirable and ravishing the glory will be.

1. *Of his unsearchable wisdom*, which hath *glory* peculiarly annext and properly belonging to it. Glory is as it were, by inheritance, due to wisdom. The *wise* shall inherit *glory*. And here now the blessed souls behold it in its first seat, and therefore in its *prime glory*, wisedom, counsel, understanding, are said to be *with* him: as if no where else. Twice we have the Apostle ascribing glory to God under the notion of *only wise*: which is but an acknowledging him glorious in this respect. Wisdom, we know, is the proper and most connatural

Prov. 3. 35.

Job. 12.

Rom. 16. 27.
1 Tim. 1. 17.

glory

glory of *intellectual nature*; whether as it relates to *ſpeculation*, when we call it *knowledge*, or *action*, when 'tis *prudence*.

How pleaſant will the contemplation be of the divine wiſdom in that former Notion; when in that glaſſe, that *ſpeculum æternitatis*, we ſhall have the lively view of all that truth, the knowledge whereof can be any way poſſible and grateful to our natures; and *in his light, ſee light*; when all thoſe vaſt treaſures of wiſedom and knowledge, (which already by their alliance to *Chriſt*, Saints are intereſted in) ſhall lye open to us. When the tree of Knowledge ſhall be without encloſure; and the moſt voluptuous Epicuriſm in reference to it be innocent! Where there ſhall neither be *luſt*, nor *forbidden fruit*, no *withholding* of *deſirable* knowledge, nor *affectation* of *undeſirable*. When the *pleaſure* of ſpeculation ſhall be without the *toil*; and that maxime be eternally antiquated, that *increaſed knowledge increaſes ſorrow!* Col. 2. 3.

*As to the other notion of it*; how can it be leſſe grateful to behold the wiſdom that made, and govern'd the world? that compaſt ſo great deſigns; and this, no longer in its effects, but in it ſelf? Thoſe *works* were honourable and glorious, ſought of all them that have pleaſure in them. What will be the glory of their *cauſe*? It would gratifie ſome mens curioſity to behold the unuſual motion of ſome rare *automaton*; but an ingenious perſon would, with much more pleaſure, prie into the ſecret Springs of that motion; and obſerve its inward frame, and parts, and their dependence, and

and order each to other. 'Tis comely to behold the exterior œconomy of a well govern'd people; when great affairs are, by orderly conduct, brought to happy issues; but to have been at the helm, to have seen the pertinent, proper application of such and such maximes to the incident cases; to have known all the reasons of state, heard debates, observ'd, with what great sagacity, inconveniencies have been foreseen, and with what diligence prevented; would much more gratifie an inquiring Genius.

When the Records of Eternity shall be exposed to view; all the counsels and results of that profound wisdom lookt into, how will it transport! when it shall be discern'd, lo! thus were the designes laid, here were the apt junctures and admirable dependencies of things, which, when acted upon the stage of the world, seem'd so perplext, and crosse, so full of mysterious intricacy?

If Saint *Paul* were so ravisht at those more obscure appearances of divine wisdom, which we find him admiring, *Rom.* 11. 33. *O the depths*, &c. what satisfaction will it yield to have a perfect modell of the deep thoughts and counsels of God presented to open view! How is the happiness of *Solomons* Servants magnified, that had the priviledge continually to *stand before him, and hear his wisdom.* But this happiness will be proportionably greater, as *Solomons God* is greater than *he.*

2. 2. *The glory of his power* will add comliness to the Object of this Vision. Power duly placed and

did allay'd is lovely. Beauty conſiſts much in a Symmetrie or proportion of parts. So muſt there be a concurrence of divine perfections to compoſe and make up the beautiful complexion of his face, to give us a *right aſpect*, the *true Idea* of God. And here his power hath a neceſſary ingrediency. How incoherent, and diſagreeing with it ſelf were the motion of an *impotent God*. His *power* gives lively ſtrokes to his glory. 'Tis called *glorious power*, or the *power of glory*. Yea, 'tis *ſimply* called *glory it ſelf*; the Apoſtle tells us, *Chriſt was raiſed from the dead by the* [*glory*] *of the Father*, when 'tis plain he means [*power*]: And the ſame Apoſtle prayes, on the behalf of the Epheſians, that God would grant them according to the *riches of his glory* to be ſtrengthened with *might*, &c. How frequently are *power* and *glory* aſcribed to him in conjunction; intimating that *as* he is *powerful* he is *glorious*. And certainly even *this glory*, cannot but caſt a grateful aſpect upon the bleſſed ſoul, and be infinitely pleaſant to behold. What triumphs doth it now raiſe in gracious Spirits to behold the *exertions of it in his works*; to read its *deſcriptions in his word*, while as yet he *holds back the face of his throne*, while the countenance of inthroned Majeſty cannot be ſeen: when ſo little a portion is heard of him, and the thunder of his *power* ſo little underſtood. The infinitely fainter Rayes of this power in a creature; power in that unſpeakable diminution and abatement, that derived, precarious power, when 'tis innocently uſed, is obſerved with pleaſure; Here

κράτος τῆς δόξης. Col. 1. 11.

Rom. 6. 4.

Chap. 3. 16.

Job 26. 9.

Ver. 14.

is

*is power* in the *throne*, power in its chief and highest seat; essential, and self-originated power; the root and fountain, the very Element of power; power in its proper situation, in its native place to which it belongs. *God hath spoken once, twice have I heard this, that power belongeth unto God.* It languishes in a Creature as in an alien Subject. *If I speak of strength, lo he is strong* (saith Job) *q. d.* Created power is not worth the speaking of: Here is the power that deserves the name, that is so indeed. How satisfying a pleasure will this afford to contemplate this *radical power?* this all-creating, all-ruling power, the principle of all action, motion, and life, throughout the whole Creation. This will be as natural a pleasure, as the Child takes in the Mothers bosom, and in imbracing the womb that bare it. How grateful to behold whence the vast frame of nature Sprang! what stretcht out the Heavens, established the Earth, sustained all things, what turned the mighty Wheels of Providence throughout all the successions of time; what ordered, and changed times and seasons, chained up Devils, restrained the outrages of a tumultuous world, preserved Gods little Flock; especially what gave Being to the new Creation, *The exceeding greatness of power that wrought in them that believed*, &c. what made hearts love God, imbrace a Saviour, what it was that overcame *their own*, and made them a willing people in that memorable day.

Psal. 62. 11. power to God Hebr.

Job. 26.

Eph. 1. 19, 20.

Psal. 110. 3.

How delightful a contemplation to think, with

with ſo inlarged an underſtanding of the poſſible effects of this power, and, ſo far as a creature can range into infinity, to view *innumerable creations*, in the *creative power* of God.

And yet how pleaſant to think not only of the extents, but of the reſtraints of this power, and how, when none could limit, it became *ordinate*, and did limit it ſelf; that, ſince it could do ſo much, it did no more; turned not ſooner a degenerous world into flames: withheld it ſelf from premature revenge, that had abortiv'd the womb of Love, and cut off all the hopes of this bleſſed Eternity that is now attained. This alſo ſpeaks the *greatneſs of power*. Let *the power of my Lord be great according as thou haſt ſpoken the Lord is gracious, long-ſuffering, &c.* This was his mightieſt power, whereby he overcame himſelf. *Fortior eſt qui ſe*, &c. *Poſſe & velle nobile.* Numb. 14. 17, 18.

3. And what do we think of the raviſhing aſpects of his Love! when it ſhall now be *open face'd*, and have laid aſide its vail; when his amiable ſmiles ſhall be chekered with no intermingled frowns: the light of that pleaſing *countenance* be obſcured by no intervening cloud! when *goodneſs* (which is love iſſuing into benefaction, or doing good) *grace* (which adds freeneſs unto goodneſs) *mercy* (which is grace towards the miſerable ſhall conſpire in their diſtinct, and variegated appearances to ſet off each other, and enhance the pleaſure of the admiring ſoul! when the wonted doubts ſhall all ceaſe, and the difficulty vaniſh of reconciling (once neceſſary) *fatherly* 3.

*severity*

*severity* with *Love*. When the full sense shall be unfolded to the life, of that description of the divine nature, *God is Love*; and the soul be no longer put to read the love of God in his *name* (as *Moses* was when the *sight* of his *face* could not yet be obtained) shall not need to spell it by letters and syllables, but behold it in His very nature it self, and see how intimately Essential it is to the *divine Being*. How glorious will this appearance of God be (we now hear something of the *glory of his grace*) and how satisfying the intuition of that glory! Now is the proper season for the full exercise and discovery of Love. This day hath been long expected and lo now 'tis dawned upon the awaking soul: It's now called forth; its senses unbound, all its powers inspirited, on purpose, for love visions and enjoyments, 'tis now to take its fill of loves. The Apostles extatical prayer is now answered to the highest degree possible with respect to such a one. He is now *according to the riches of divine glory, strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man—— to comprehend with all Saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; to know the love that passeth knowledge*, &c. He shall now no longer stand amazed spending his ghesses *What manner of love this should be* and expecting fuller discoveries, further effects of it, *that did not yet appear*; but sees the utmost, all that his soul can bear or wish to see. He hath now traced home the rivulets to their fountain, the beams to the very Sun of Love. He hath got the prospect, at last, into that heart, where the

Eph. 1. 6.

Eph. 3. 16, 17, 18. 17.

where the great thoughts of love were lodg'd from everlasting? where all its counsels and designs were formed. He sees what made God become a man? what cloathed a Deity with humane flesh? what made Eternity become the birth of time (when come to its parturient *fulnes*) what mov'd the heart of the Son of God to pitch his Tabernacle among men? what ingaged him to the enterprize of redeeming sinners? what mov'd him so earnestly to contest with a perishing world? led him at last to the Cross, made him content to become a sacrifice to God, a spectacle to Angels and men in a bitter reproachful death, inflicted by the Sacrilegious hands of those whom he was all this while designing to save. The amazed soul now sees into the bottom of this design; understands why it self was not made a prey to Divine revenge; whence it was that it perisht not in its enmity against God; that he was not provoked, by the obstinacy of its disobedience, and malice of its unbelief, beyond the possibility of an atonement; why he so long suffered its injurious neglects of him, and unkind repulses of a merciful Saviour; and perswaded till at last he overcame, made the averse heart yield, the careless disaffected soul cry out, Where is my God? now a Christ or I perish? All this is now resolved into *love*; And the adoring soul sees how well the effects agree to their cause, and are owned by it. Nothing but heaven it self that gives the *sense*, can give the *notion* of this pleasure. Gal. 4. 4.

4. *Nor will the glory of holineſs*, be leſs reſplendent, that great Attribute which even in a remote deſcent from its original, is frequently mentioned with the adjunct of *beauties*. Pſal. 110. 3. What lovelineſs will thoſe *beauties* add to this &c. *bleſſed face*!

Not here to inſiſt (which is beſides my purpoſe) upon the various notions of holineſs. 2 Cor. 7. 1. *Real holineſs* Scripture ſtates in *purity*, an alienation from ſin, 'tis ſet in oppoſition to all filthineſs to all moral impurity, and in that notion it beſt agrees to God, and comprehends his *righteouſneſs*, and *veracity*, and indeed, whatever we can conceive in him under the notion of a moral excellency.

This may therefore be ſtyl'd a tranſcendental attribute, that as it were runs through the reſt, and caſts a glory upon every one. Titan attribute of attributes: Thoſe are fit predications, *holy power*, *holy truth*, *holy love*, &c. And ſo it is the very luſtre, and glory of his other perfe- Exod. 15. 11. ctions. *He is glorious in holineſs.* Hence in matters of greateſt moment, he is ſometimes Pſal. 89. 35. brought in *Swearing by his holineſs* (which he Amos 4 2. is not wont to do by any one ſingle attribute) as though it were a fuller expreſſion of himſelf, (an *adæqualior conceptus*) *than* any of the reſt.

What is of ſo great account with him, will not be of leaſt account with his holy ones, when they appear in his glorious preſence. Their own holineſs is a conformity to his, the likeneſs of it. And as their beholding it forms them into that likeneſs: ſo that likeneſs makes

makes them capable of beholding it with pleaſure. Divine holineſs doth now more *ravish* than *affright*. This *hath* been the language of ſinful duſt, *Who can ſtand before this holy God?* when holineſs hath appeared arm'd with terrors, guarded with flames, and the Divine Majeſty been repreſented as a conſuming fire. Such apprehenſions ſin and guilt naturally beget. *The ſinners of Sion were afraid.* But ſo far as the new man is put on, created after God, and they who were darkneſs, are made light in the Lord, he is not under any notion more acceptable to them, than as he is the *holy one*. They love his *Law*, becauſe *holy*; and love *each other*, becauſe *holy*, and *hate themſelves*, becauſe they are no more ſo. Holineſs hath ſtill a pleaſing aſpect when they find it in an Ordinance, meet it in a Sabbath, every glimpſe of it is lovely. But with what triumphs hath the holineſs of God himſelf been celebrated even by Saints on earth? *Who is a God like unto thee, glorious in holineſs! There is none holy as the Lord, for there is none beſides thee. Sing unto the Lord, all ye Saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holineſs.* What thoughts will they have of it, * when their eyes can behold that glory? when they immediately look on the *archetypal holineſs*, of which, their own is but the *image*; and can view that glorious pattern they were ſo long

1 Sam 6.

Exod. 15. 11. 1 Sam 2. Pſal. 30. 4. 97. 12.

* *ſi ergo pulchitudo divina nondum viſa, ſed totum credita & ſperata tantum ignem deſiderii excitat: Quid faciet cùm remoto velo ut eâ in ſe conſpicitur? Omnia id faciet ut torrente voluptatis illius inebriati, neque velimus, neque poſſimus, vel ad punctum temporis oculos ab eâ divertere.* Bellarm. de aſcenſ. mentis ad Deum grad. 2.

in framing to! How joyfully will they then fall in with the reſt of the heavenly hoaſt; and joyn in the ſame adoration and praiſe; in the ſame acclamation, and triumphant ſong, *holy, holy, holy, Lord God of Sabaoth.* How unconceiveable is the pleaſure of this ſight; when the αὐτὸ κάλον, the *firſt pulchritude*, the original beauty offers it ſelf to view! Holineſs *is intellectual beauty*; Divine holineſs is the moſt perfect, and the meaſure of all other; And what is the pleaſure or ſatisfaction, of which we ſpeak but the perfection and *reſt* of love! Now *Love, as love, reſpects, and connotes a pulchritude in its object.* And then the moſt perfect pulchritude, the *ineffable, and immortal pulchritude, that cannot be declared by words, or ſeen with eyes,* (they are an Heathens * expreſſions concerning it) how can it but *perfectly*, and eternally pleaſe and ſatisfie!

* *Max. Tyr. diſſert.* 11.

*Id. Ibid.*

And we are told by the great Pagan *Theologue* * in what ſtate we can have the felicity of that ſpectacle; not in our preſent ſtate: When we have, indeed, but obſcure repreſentations of ſuch things as are, with ſouls, of higheſt excellency. But when we are aſſociated to the *bleſſed quire.* When we are delivered from the body (which we now carry about *as the Oyſter doth its ſhell.*) When we are no longer ſenſible of the evills of time, when we wholly apply our ſelves to that bleſſed viſion, are admitted to the beholding of the ſimple permanent ſights, and behold them, being our ſelves pure, in the pure light: Then have we the view of the *bright ſhining pulchritude*, &c.

* *Plato in Phædro paſſim.* (Though he there ſpeak theſe things as the memories of his ſuppoſed præexiſtent ſoul) Δεδαιμων κορυβαντιᾷ τάχιστα ἀνὴρ κεφαλῆ κεφαλὴ ἵλης κάλλιστα ἀκροτάτη.

2. *It*

2. *It is an entire or united glory.* We have ſomething of the divine glory ſhining, now, upon us: but the many interpoſitions cauſe a multifarious refraction of its light. We have but its diſperſed rayes, its ſcattered diſchevel'd beams; we ſhall then have it perfect and full. 'Tis the eternal glory we are hereafter to behold.

Eternity (as the notion of it is wont to be ſtated) is a duration that excludes both { Succeſſion, and End.

And if it be an unſucceſſive duration, (though it is more difficult to apprehend how the being or injoyments of a creature can come under that menſuration) the glory preſented to the view of a bleſſed ſoul, cannot be preſented by parcels, but at once. * In our temporary ſtate, while we are under the meaſure of time, we are not capable of the *fulneſs* of bleſſedneſs, or miſery, for time exiſts not altogether but by parts. And indeed we can neither injoy, nor ſuffer more at once than can can be compaſt within one moment; for no more exiſts together. But our relation to eternity (according to this notion of it) will render the ſame invariable appearance of glory alwayes preſentaneous to us, in the entire fulneſs of it. We read indeed of certain ὑστερήματα θλίψεως *afterings of Faith* (as it may be ſignificantly enough rendred, let but the novelty of the expreſſion be pardoned) things lacking we read it, but there will be

* *Æternitas eſt interminabilis vitæ tota ſimul & perfecta poſſeſſio.*

1 Theſ. 3. 10.

here no ἐπιφύμια δόξης *afterings of glory.* What is perfect admits no increaſe; 'tis already full, and why ſhould not a full glory ſatisfie? there's here no expectation of (greater) *future*, to abate the pleaſure of *preſent* diſcoveries. Why therefore ſhall not this *ſatisfaction* be conceived full and perfect? It muſt be the *fulneſs of joy.*

3. 3. *'Tis permanent glory*; a never fading, unwithering glory, (ἀμάραντος, ἀμαραντος) glory that will never be ſullied, or obſcured, never be in a declination. This bleſſed face never grows old; never any wrinkle hath place in it. 'Tis the *eternal glory*, in the other parts of the notion of *eternity*; as it imports an endleſs duration, neither ſubject to *decay*, in *it ſelf*, or to injury, or impairment *from without.* As ſtable as the divine being [*thy God, thy Glory*, the Lord thy everlaſting light] if that have a *true* ſenſe with reſpect to any ſtate of the Church *militant on earth*, it muſt needs have a more *full* ſenſe, in reference to it *triumphing in heaven.* As, therefore, full, entire glory afford's *fulneſs of joy*, *permanent*, *everlaſting* glory affords *pleaſures for ever more.*

1 Pet 1 3. 2 Cor. 4. 17. 2 Tim. 2 10. 1 Pet. 5 10. Iſa. 60. 14. Pſal 16 11.

*An appropriate glory*, even to them 'tis ſo, a glory wherein they are really intereſſed. 'Tis

{ The glory of their God,
And their happineſs is deſigned to them from it.

They are not unconcern'd in it as 'tis *the glory of God.* It cannot but be grateful to them to behold

behold the ſhining glory of *their God*, whom they feared, and ſerved before; while they could have no ſuch ſight of him. That glory of his was once under a cloud, concealed from the world, wrapt up in obſcurity; It now breaks the cloud, and juſtifies the fear, and reverence of his faithful, and Loyal ſervants, againſt Atheiſtical Rebels that feared him not. 'Tis infinitely pleaſing to ſee *him* now ſo glorious, whom they thought to have a glory beyond all their conceptions before; while others would not think ſo of him, but judg'd it ſafe to ſlight, and ſet him at nought. Subjects ſhare in their Princes glory, Children in their Fathers. But beſides that collateral intereſt, that intereſt by reflection.

They have a more direct intereſt in this glory. A true and real right upon a manifold title, The Fathers gift, Sons purchaſe, Holy Ghoſts obſignation, and earneſt; The promiſes tender; their faiths acceptance; their forerunners *prepoſſeſſion*; yea 'tis their *inheritance*; they are children, and therefore heirs, heirs of God, and joynt-heirs with Chriſt, *to the ſame glory with him.* They are by him received to the glory of God, *called to his Kingdom and glory.* Will it not contribute exceedingly to their ſatisfaction, when they ſhall look upon this glory, not as unconcern'd ſpectators, but as interreſſed perſons. *This is my happineſs to behold and enjoy this bleſſed God?* what a rapturous expreſſion is that, *God our own God ſhall bleſs us*, and that, *Thy God thy glory.* Upon intereſt

Rom. 8. 17. Ch. 15 7. 1 Theſ. 2. 12.

Pſal. 67. 6.

terest in God, follows their interest in *his glory and blessedness*: Which is so much the dearer, and more valuable, *as it is theirs. Their glory*, from *their God*. They shall be blessed by *God, their own God*; *Drink waters out of their own well*. How indearing a thing is propriety! Another mans son is ingenious, comely, personable; this may be matter of envy, but *mine own is so*, this is a joy. I read in the life of a devout Nobleman of *France* * that receiving a Letter from a friend, in which were incerted these words, *Deus meus, & omnia*; *my God, and my all*; he thus returns back to him, "I know "not what your intent was to put into your let- "ter these words, *Deus meus, & omnia*; *my* "*God, and my all*: Only you invite thereby to "return the same to you, and to all creatures; "*My God, and my all, my God, and my all, my* "*God and my all*: If perhaps you take this for "your Motto, and use it to express how full "your heart is of it; think you it possible I "should be silent upon such an invitation? "and not express my sense thereof? Likewise "be it known unto you therefore, that he is *my* "*God, and my all*; and if you doubt of it, I "shall speak it an hundred times over: I shall "add no more; for any thing else is superflu- "ous to him that is truly penetrated with *my* "*God, and my all*; I leave you therefore in "this happy state of subjection; and conjure "you to beg for me of God the solid sense of "these words.

* Monsieur de Renti.

And do we think my God, and my all, or *my God, and my glory*, will have lost its emphasis in

in heaven! or that 'twill be leſs ſignificant among awaked ſouls? Theſe things concur then, concerning the object; 'tis moſt *excellent* (even divine) *entire*, *permanent*, and *theirs*: How can it but ſatisfie?

## CHAP. VI.

*What the Viſion of Gods face contributes to the Souls ſatisfaction. Eſtimated from the conſideration of the act of viſion it ſelf. Wherein this pleaſure ſurpaſſes that of ſenſe. A compariſon purſued more at large, between this* intuition *and* diſcourſe *between it,* and *Faith. This intuition more abſolutely, conſidered its characters; and why they contribute to the ſatisfaction of the bleſſed Souls. That 'tis* (viz.) *efficacious, comprehenſive, fixed, appropriative.*

THE *act* of *viſion*, or *intuition* it ſelf. How great the pleaſure will be that accrues to the bleſſed from this ſight of Gods face, is very much alſo to be eſtimated from the *nature of the act*; as well as *the excellency of the object*. In as much as every vital act is *pleaſant*, the moſt perfect act of the nobleſt facultie of the ſoul muſt needs be attended with *higheſt pleaſure*. 'Tis a pleaſure that moſt nearly imimates divine pleaſure. And every thing 2.

*Res ſunt perfectiones vel imperfectiones prout à ſumma perfectione magis vel minimè abſtedunt.*

thing is more perfect, as it more nearly approaches divine perfection.

Intellectual pleasure is as much nobler than that of sense; as an immortal Spirit is more noble than a clod of earth. The pleasure of sense is drossie feculent, the pleasure of the mind refined, and pure; *that* is faint and languid, *this* lively, and vigorous; *that* scant and limited, *this* ample and inlarged; *that* temporary and fading, *this* durable, and permanent; *that* flashie, superficial; *this* solid and intense; *that* raving, and distracted; *this* calm and composed. Whence even that great (reputed) sensualist Epicure himself, professedly disclaimes (or is represented as disclaiming) the conceit of placing happiness in sensual delights.

*Pet. Molin. de cognitione dei.* See *Culverwel* of the light of nature speaking (as I remember) to this purpose. c. 17.

*Quo cum & cum universe voluptatem beatæ vitæ esse finem dicimus; longè profectò absumus ut eas voluptates quæ sunt virorum luxu dissolutorum, aut aliorum etiam, quatenus spectantur in ipsâ motione, actione fruendi; quâ nimirum sensus jucundè dulciterque afficitur, intelligamus: veluti quidam rem ignorantes, aut à nobis dissentientes, aut aliquid adversum nos malè affecti, interpretantur; Sed illud duntaxat (ut res est verum dicatur) intelligimus; nos dolere corpore; animo non perturbari,* Gassend. Syntag. Philos. Epicur.

And, as the pleasure of intellection excells all the pleasure of sense, so doth the pleasure of intuition, excel all other intellectual pleasure. Let us to this purpose, but consider, generally, this way of knowing things, and compare it with those two other waves, by { Discourse. / Faith.

1. *Discourse.* I mean (that I be not mistaken by the vulgar Reader) the *discourse of the mind*

*ind* or *ratiocination*, that way of attaining the knowledge of things, by comparing one thing with another, coſidering their mutual relations, connexions, dependencies; and ſo arguing out what was more doubtful, and obſcure, from what was more known and evident.

To the altogether unlearned it will hardly be conceiveable; and to the learned it need not be told, how high a gratification this employment of his Reaſon naturally yields to the mind of a man: When the harmonious contexture of truths with truths; the apt coincidence, the ſecret links, and junctures of coherent notions are clearly diſcerned; When *effects* are traced up to their *cauſes*; *Properties* lodg'd in their native *ſubjects*: Things ſifted to their Principles. What a pleaſure is it when a man ſhall apprehend himſelf regularly led on (though but by a ſlender thred of diſcourſe) through the Labyrinths of nature; when ſtill new diſcoveries are ſucceſsfully made, every further enquiry ending in a further proſpect; and every new Scene of things entertaining the mind with a freſh delight! How many have ſuffered a voluntary baniſhment from the world, as if they were wholly ſtrangers, and unrelated to it; rejected the blandiſhments of ſenſe, macerated themſelves with unwearied ſtudies for this pleaſure; making the eaſe and health of their bodies, to give place to the content and ſatisfaction of their minds!

*Felix qui potuit rerum cognoſcere cauſas.*

But how much intuition hath the advantage, above this way of knowledge, may

*Nos nulli tædio investigandæ veritatis, cuilibet opinioni potius ignavi succumbimus; quam in explorandâ veritate, pertinaci diligentiâ perseverare volum.* Min. Felix, Oct. v. 9.

may be seen in these two obvious respects.

1. *'Tis a more facile way of knowing*; Here is no need of a busie search; a tiresome indagation, (the difficulty whereof makes the more slothful, rather trust than try) a chaining together of consequencies. The Soul hath its cloathing (its vestment of light) upon as cheap terms as the Lilies theirs; doth neither toyl nor spin for it: And yet *Solomon*, in all the glory of his (famed) wisdom was not aray'd like it. This knowledge saves the expence of study, is instantaneous not successive; The soul now sees more, at one view, in a moment, than before in a lifes-time. As a man hath a speedier, and more grateful prospect of a pleasant Country, by placing himself in some commodious station that commands the whole Region; than by travelling through it. 'Tis no pains to look upon what offers it self to my eye. Where there is a continued series of consequencies, that lie naturally connected; the soul pleasingly observes this continuity, but views the whole frame, the whole length of the line, at once (so far as its limited capacity can extend) and needs not discuss every particle, severally, in this series of truths; and proceed gradatim from the knowledge of one truth to another; in which case only one, at once, would be present to its view. It sees things *that are* connected, not *because they* are so. As a man coveniently plac't in some eminent station, may possibly see, at one view, all the successive parts of a gliding stream *; but he that sits by the waters side, not changing his

* *Atqui ut homini sedenti in ripâ fluminis sola aqua præsens est quæ ei hoc temporis punctô observatur, eidem vero hominis totum flumen aspectûs esset si supra fontem aut circa ostium fluminis posset aspicere: Ita oculo Dei, &c.* P. Malmenus de cognit. Dei.

place, ſees the ſame parts only becauſe they ſucceed, and theſe that paſſe make way for them that follow to come under his eye: doth a learned man, apply, deſcribe the ſucceſſive knowledge of God; of which the ſanctified ſouls way of knowing, is an *imitation*, the very words *ſeeing* or *beholding* (which it is frequently ſet forth by in Scripture) do naturally import. Yet that as to them, all ratiocination ſhall be excluded that ſtate, I ſee no reaſon to admit; though with God it can have no place. And, as he is reckon'd to live more eaſanter life, that ſpends upon a plentiful eſtate; than he that gets his bread by the ſweat of his brows; ſo this more eaſie way of knowledg muſt needs be reckon'd more pleaſing. This knowledge is as *Jacob's* Veniſon, not hunted for, but brought to hand. The race is not given to the ſwift; The unlearned Ideot knows as much as the profoundeſt Rabbi (at leaſt with as much ſatisfaction) and all arms are of an equal ſize. *Herbert.*

2. 'Tis more certain. For what do we uſe to reckon ſo certain as what we ſee with our eyes? *Better* (even in this reſpect) *is the ſight of the eyes, than the wandring of the deſire.* While, *here*, the mind is carried with moſt earneſt deſire to purſue knowledge, it very often miſtakes its way, and miſerably wanders. In our moſt wary ratiocinations, we many times ſhoot at rovers; but when we know by this Viſion, our mark is immediately preſented to our eye. We are in no danger to be impoſed upon by deluſive appearances of things

things. We look through no fallacious me
dium's, are held in no ſuſpence; puzled wi
no doubts, whether ſuch conſequencies wi
hold, ſuch concluſions be rightly infer'd, an
ſo are not retarded from giving a preſent un
wavering aſſent. Here are no perplexing in
tricacies, no dubious hallucinations, or un
certain gueſſes; we ſee things as they are by
ſimple and undeceiving light, with both *ſub
jective*, and *objective certainty*, being ſecur
both from *doubt*, and *error*.

2. Faith. How magnificent things do
Scripture ſpeak of this grace! which the ex
perience alſo of ſuch as have been wont to li
by it (*i. e.* to make it the governing princip
of their lives) doth abundantly confirm. Ha
clear are its apprehenſions? *'tis the evidence*
Heb 11. 1. *things not ſeen*; how ſweet its enjoyments
*whom not ſeeing ye love, and though now you*
1 Pet. 1. 8. *him not, yet believing, ye rejoyce with joy unſpea
able and full of glory.*

Even the Heathen Theology hath magnifi
it above knowledge, "What is it (faith one
"that unites us with the ſelf-goodneſs, and
"joyns us thereto, that it quiets or gives re
"to all our action and motion; I will expre
"it in one word, 'tis faith it ſelf, which u
* ὁ γνωσικῶς "ſpeakably and after a hidden manner, do
ἁδὲ ἀτελῶς "unite and conjoyn happy ſouls with the ſel
ἀλλ' ἐπιδόν- "good. For (ſaith he) it concerns us n
τας ἑαυτὰς πρὸ "either in a way of Science * or with any in
θείω φωτὶ &c. "perfection to enquire after the good but
*Proclus in Plat. Theol.* "behold our ſelves in the divine light, and
"ſhutting our eyes, to be placed in t
"unknow

unknown and secret unity of beings.

And a latter writer gives us this, as a conclusion from that former Author. That as *Faith* which is *credulity*, is below *Science*, so that *Faith*, which is truly so called, is, super-substantially, above Science, and intelligence immediately uniting us to God. *Pseud. Mirand.*

But 'tis evident intuitive knowledge far exceeds even faith also. Isa. 53. 1. Rom. 10. 16.

1. 'Tis more distinct and clear, Faith is taking a thing upon report; *Who hath believed our report?* And they are more *general*, *languid* apprehensions, we have of things this way. Faith enters at the ear; *it comes by hearing*. And if we compare the perceptions of these two external senses; that of *hearing*, and *sight*, the latter is unspeakably more *clear*, and satisfying. He that hath knowledge of a forreign Country, only by report of another, hath very indistinct apprehensions of it, in comparison of him who hath travell'd it himself. While the Queen of *Sheba* only *heard* of *Solomons* glory, she could not satisfie her self, without an *ἐπόπτικὸν*, the sight of her own eye; and, when she saw it, she saith, the one half was not told her of what she now beheld. The Ear more slowly and gradually receives; and the Tongue more defectively expresses, to another, an account of things, than ones ocular inspection would take it in. But, as to the excellency of this intuitive knowledge above Faith, the comparison lyes not between knowing by the ministry of a more noble sense, and a less noble, but knowing by dependance on a less noble,

and

and without dependence upon any at all. When God hath been pleaſed to afford diſcoveries in that way of Viſion to men in the body (his Prophets, &c.) he hath uſually bound up all their ſenſes by ſleep, or trances; ſenſe hath had no part or lot in this matter, unto believing it muſt neceſſarily concurr.

2. *More effective.* What we ſee, even with our external eye, much more powerfully moves our heart, than what we onely give credit to upon hearſay. The Queen of *Sheba* much admired no doubt *Solomons* famed ſplendor, and magnificence, while ſhe only heard of it, but when ſhe ſaw it, it puts her into an extaſie, it raviſh'd away her ſoul, *ſhe had no more ſpirit, &c.* What would the ſight of the Divine glory do, if God did not ſtrengthen *with all might*; were there not as well *glorious power* to *ſupport*, as *powerful glory* to *transform!*

*Job* had *heard of God, by the hearing of the ear*, but when *once his eye ſaw him* (whether that were by the appearance of any ſenſible glory, which is probable enough, for 'tis ſaid, *the Lord anſwered him out of the whirlewind*, or whether by a more immediate revelation, 'tis leſs-material (what work did it make in his ſoul?

The Devils *believe*, and tremble; ſo impreſſive are the pre-apprehenſions of Judgment to come, and the conſequents thereof with them; yet their preſent torment, thence, is no torment, in compariſon (*art thou come to torment us before the time?*) of what they expect. Let wicked men conſider this (they will have their

their intuitions in hell too) were your belief, and terror thereupon, with reference to the eternal Judgment, and the impendent wrath of God, equal to what the Devils themselves have, upon the same account; actual sensation will make you more exceed your selves in point of misery, than the Devils do now exceed you. There is, no doubt, a proportionable difference between the impressions of present faith, and future vision, with holy souls. Now, *not seeing, yet believing, they rejoyce with joy unspeakable*: their present joy cannot be *spoken*; their future then cannot be *thought!* Experience daily tells us, how greatly, sensible, present objects have the advantage upon us, beyond those that are spiritual and distant, though infinitely more excellent and important. When the tables are turned, the now sensible things disappear, a new scene of things invisible and eternal, is immediately presented to our view; the excellency of the objects, the dispositedness of the subjects, the nature of the act, shall all multiply the advantages on this part, How affective will this vision be; beyond what we have ever found the faint apprehensions of our so much disadvantaged faith to amount to? A kind message from an indulgent Father to his far-distant Son, informing of his welfare, and yet continuing love will much affect, but the sight of his Fathers face will even transport and overcome him with joy.

But further consider this intuition a little more particularly and absolutely in it self.

So you may take this somewhat distincter account of it in some few particulars, corresponding to those by which the object (the glory to be beheld) was lately characterized.

1. *It will be a vigorous efficacious intuition*; as that which it beholds is *the most excellent, even the divine glory*; such an object cannot be beheld but with an eye full of lively vigour; a sparkling, a radient eye; A weak eye would be struck blind, would fail, and be closed up at the first glance. We must suppose, then, this Vision to be accompanied with the highest vitality, the strongest energy: A mighty plenitude of Spirit, and Power, no lesse than the divine; nothing but the *divine power* can sufficiently fortifie the soul to behold *divine glory*. When the Apostle speaks only of his desire of glory, *he that hath wrought us to this self same thing* (saith he) *is God*; he that hath moulded us, suitably framed us for this thing (as the word signifieth) is God; 'tis the work of a Deity to make a Soul desire Glory; certainly then 'tis his work to give the power of beholding it, and by how much the more of *power*, so much the more of *pleasure*, in this Vision. *Weak sight* would afford but *languid joy*. But when the whole soul animated with divine power and life shall seat it self in the eye: when it shall be as it were *all eye*, (as one said of God, whom now it perfectly imitates) and be wholly intent upon Vision; apply it self thereto with all its might as its only busi-
S. Hycronym. nesse, what satisfying joyes doth it now taste! renewed by every repeated view! How doth it

it now as it were prey upon glory, as the eye of the Eagle upon the beams of the Sun! we meet with the expreſſion of *aures bibulæ*, here will be *oculi bibuli*, thirſty eyes. A ſoul ready to drink in glory at the eye. If viſion be by intermiſſion, what *attractive eyes* are here? drawing in glory, feeding upon glory: If by extramiſſion, what piercing darting eyes, ſending forth the ſoul at every look to embrace the glorious object.

There is a great power that now attends *vallizing thoughts* of God; whether it appear in the conſequent working of the ſoul directly towards God, or by way of reflection upon it ſelf. If directly towards God, how mightily is he admired; *who is a God like unto thee!* If by reflection upon our own ſin, and vileneſs; how deeply doth it humble, —*Now mine eye ſeeth thee, therefore I abhor my ſelf— Wo is me, I am undone, --- mine eyes have ſeen the Lord of glory.* If by way of reflection upon our intereſt in him, or relation to him; how mightily doth it ſupport and comfort? *I will look to the Lord, --- my God will hear me.* How full of ſuch ſenſe is that Scripture, *They looked to him, and were lightned*, one look cloath'd them with light, caſt a glory upon their ſouls; fill'd them with life and joy: 'twas but a thought, the caſt of an eye, and they were as full as hearts could hold. O, the power then of theſe heavenly viſions! when we dwell in the views of that transforming glory!

Mic. 7. 7.

Pſal 34 5.

2. *This will be a comprehenſive intuition*; as its object is *entire glory*. I mean comparatively, 2.

not abſolutely comprehenſive. More of the divine glory will be comprehended, unſpeakably, than before. 'Tis called, we know, by the Schoolmen, the knowledge of *comprehenſors*, in contradiſtinction to that of *viators*; we ſhall better be able to diſcern the divine excellencies *together*; have much more adequate conceptions, a fuller, and more compleat notion of God: We ſhall ſee him *as he is*. 'Tis too much obſervable, how in our preſent ſtate, we are prejudiced by our partial conceptions of him, and what an *inequality* they cauſe in the temper of our Spirits.

For wicked men, *the very notion they have of God*, proves fatal to their ſouls; or is of a moſt deſtructive tendency, becauſe they comprehend not *together* what God hath revealed of himſelf. Moſt uſually, they confine thoſe few thoughts of God they have only to his mercy, and that excluſively, as to his holineſs, and juſtice; hence their vain and mad preſumption. The notion of an *unholy* (or a not-holy, and not-juſt) God what wickedneſs would it not induce? *Thou thought'ſt I was altogether ſuch a one as thy ſelf*: A God after their own hearts: then the reigns are let looſe. More rarely, when the conſcience of guilt hath arreſted the ſelf-condemned wretch; God is thought of under no other notion, than of an irreconcileable enemy, and avenger; as one thirſting after the blood of Souls, and that will admit of no atonement; ſo without all pretence, and ſo flatly contrary to all his diſcoveries of himſelf, do men dare to affix to him black

black and horrid characters, forged only out, the radicated and inveterate hatred of their own hearts againſt him. (That never takes up good thoughts of any one) only becauſe they have no mind to acquaint themſelves with him; and that they may have ſome colour for their affected diſtance; and ſo, perhaps, never return, but periſh under an horrid, wilful deſpair.

And even the people of God themſelves are too apt, ſometimes, ſo wholly to fix their eye upon *love*, and *grace*; that they grow into an unbecoming, uncreaturely familiarity, while the thoughts of Infinite Majeſty, adorable greatneſs, and glory are aſleep ſometimes, poſſibly, apprehend vindicative juſtice, the indignation and jealouſie of God againſt ſin, (precluding, meanwhile, the conſideration of his indulgent compaſſions towards truly humble, and penitent ſouls) to that degree of affrightment, and dread, that they grow into an unchildlike ſtrangneſs towards him; and take little pleaſure in drawing nigh to him.

But when *now* our eye ſhall take in the diſcovery of divine glory *equally*; how ſweet, and ſatisfying a pleaſure will ariſe from that grateful mixture of *reverent love, humble joy, modeſt confidence, meek courage, a proſtrate magnanimity, a triumphant veneration*, a ſoul ſhrinking *before the divine glory into nothing; yet not contenting it ſelf with any leſs enjoyment, than of him who is all in all.*

There's nothing here in this complexion, or

temper of Soul, but hath its warrant, in the various aſpect of the face of God comprehenſively beheld, nothing but what is (even by its ſuitableneſs) highly grateful, and pleaſing.

3. 3. *'Twill be fixed, ſteady intuition* (as its object is permanent glory.) The viſion of God can neither *infer*, nor *admit* wearineſs. The eye cannot divert, its act is eternally delectable, and affords an unvariable, undecaying pleaſure. Senſual delights ſoon end in loathing; quickly bring a glutting ſurfet, and degenerate into torments, * when they are continued & unintermittent. A Philoſopher in an Epiſtle which he writes to a friend, from the Court of *Dionyſius*, where he was forceably detained, thus bemoans himſelf, "We are unhappy *O Ariſtippus*, beyond meaſure, and how can we "but be unhappy that are burdened by the "Tyrant every day with the moſt ſumptuous "feaſts, plentiful compotations, precious oin-"ments, gorgeous apparel, and I knew as ſoon "as I came into this Iſland and City, how un-"happy my life would be. This is the nature and common condition of even the moſt pleaſing ſenſible objects. They firſt tempt, then pleaſe a little, then diſappoint, and laſtly vex. The eye that beholds them blaſt's them, quickly rifles and deflowers their glory; and views them with no more delight at firſt, than diſdain afterwards. Creature enjoyments have a bottom, are ſoon drained & drawn dry: hence there muſt be frequent diverſions; Other pleaſures muſt be ſought out; and

* *Peſſima eſt, quæ voluptatis vocatur ubi modum tranſcenderit pœnitentia.* Sen. Ep. 83. Κακοδαιμονῶ μὲν ὦ ἀνδρὸς, ὅτι μοχθηρὸς, &c. *Socratericorum Epiſt.* 5.

and are choſen, not becauſe they are *better*, but becauſe they are *new*.

This demonſtrates the emptineſs and vanity of the Creature. *Affectation of variety* only proceeds from *ſenſe of want*; and is a confeſſion, upon trial, that there is not, in ſuch an enjoyment, what was expected.

Proportionably, in the ſtate of glory, a conſtant, indeficient *fulneſs* renders the bleſſed ſoul undeſirous of any change. There is no need of varieties, or diverſions; what did once pleaſe, can never ceaſe to do ſo. This glory cannot fade or loſe any thing of its attractive power. The *faculty* cannot languiſh or loſe the diſpoſition by which it is contempered and made proportionable thereto: Hence no wearineſs can enſue. What, a ſoul in which the love of God is perfected, grow weary of beholding him! The Sun will ſooner grow weary of ſhining; The touch'd Needle of turning its ſelf to its wonted point; every thing will ſooner grow weary of its centre, and the moſt fundamental Laws of Nature be ſooner antiquated and made void for ever.

*The eye of the fool, Solomon tells us is in the ends of the earth*; *his* only, is a rolling wandring eye, that knows not where to fix, wiſdom guides, and fixes the eye of the holy ſoul, determines it unto God only. *I will bleſs the Lord, who hath given me counſel, my reines alſo inſtruct me.—I have ſet the Lord always before me.* Surely heaven will not render it leſs capable of *dijudication*, of paſſing a right judg- Prov. 17. 24. Pſal. 16, 7, 8

ment of the excellency & worth of things. And, here, *a rational* judgment will find no *want*; & an *irrational* will find no *place*. Therefore, as *permanent* glory will certainly infer *a perpetual* vision: perpetuated vision will as certainly perpetuate the souls satisfaction, and blessedness.

4. *'Twill be a possessive intuition*: as 'tis an *appropriate glory* which it pitches upon. 'Twill be the language of *every look*; *this glory is mine*. The Soul looks not upon it shily, as if it had nothing to do with it; or with slight, and careless glances; but the very posture of its eye speaks its interest, and proclaimes the pretentions it hath to this glory. With how different an aspect, doth a *stranger*, passing by, and the *owner* look upon the same house, the same lands. A mans eye layes his claim for him, and avowes his right. A grateful object that one can say is *his own*, he arrests it with his eye. So do Saints with appropriative looks, behold their God, and the Divine Glory.
Isa. 66. 1, 2. Even with such an eye as he was wont to behold them. *To this man will I look*, &c. (that is, as the place of my rest, mentioned before)
2 Tim. 2. 19. he designes him with his eye, which is the import of that expression. *The Lord knows who are his*. His eye markes them out; owns them as his own. As concerning others, whom he *disowns*, the phrase is, *I know you not*. And how vastly different is such an intuition, from that, when I look upon a thing with an hungry lingring eye which I must never enjoy, or never expect to be the better for. This *vision* is *fruitive*; unites the soul with the blessed object

ject. Which kind of ſight is meant when actual bleſſedneſs is ſo often expreſt by ſeeing God.

We ſee then what viſion, the ſight of Gods face contributes to the ſatisfaction of bleſſed ſouls.

## CHAP. VII.

*Wherein aſſimilation (the likeneſs or glory of God impreſt) contributes unto ſatisfaction: Where is particularly propounded to be ſhewn; what pleaſure it involves; what it diſpoſes to. What it involves in the eſſe of it, what in the cognoſci.* 1. *The pleaſure of* being like God, *diſcovered.* 1. *Shewing, concerning the Image of God (generally conſidered) that it is the ſouls health and ſoundneſs reſtored; that it is a* vital, *an* intimate, *a* connatural, *a perfect* image.

OUr next buſineſs is to diſcover what *aſſimilation*, or the *impreſſed likeneſs of God* may further add to this ſatisfied ſtate, or what ſatisfying pleaſure the bleſſed ſoul finds in this, that it is *like God.* 2.

And here we are diſtinctly to enquire into

The pleaſure which ſuch { *involves in it ſelf*, an *aſſimilation to God* { *tends, and diſpoſes to*

1. *The pleaſure it involves in it ſelf*; or which is

*is* taken in it abstractly considered; which we may, more particularly unfold by shewing.

The pleasure involved, { 1. In being like God. 2. In knowing or reflecting upon the same.

The { *Esse*, *Cognosci* } { *Of this assimulation.*

1. *The pleasure in being like God*; which may be discovered both by *a general* consideration hereof, and by instancing in some *particulars*, wherein blessed souls shall be like him. 1.

1. It is obvious to suppose an inexpressible pleasure in the very feeling, the inward sensation, the holy soul will have of that happy frame *in general*, whereinto it is now brought. That joyful harmony, that intire rectitude it finds within it self. You may as soon separate light from a Sun-beam, as pleasure from such a state.

This likeness, or conformity to God is an ἐυεξια a perfect temperament; an athletique healthfulness; a strong sound constitution of soul: Do but imagine what it is to a mans body, after a wasting sickness, to find himself *well*. Frame a notion of the pleasure of health and soundness, when both all the parts and members of the body are in their proper places and proportions, a lively, active vigour, a sprightly strength possesses every part, and actuates the whole, how pleasant is this temper! If we were *all body*, there could be no greater felicity than this. But by how much the

the more noble any creature is, ſo is it capable of more exquiſite paines, or pleaſures. * Sin is the ſickneſs and diſeaſe of the ſoul, infeebles all its powers; exhauſts its vigour, waſts its ſtrength. You know the reſtleſs toſſings, the weary rollings to,& fro of a diſeaſed languiſhing body; ſuch is the caſe of a ſinful ſoul. Let it but ſeriouſly bethink it ſelf, and then ſpeak its own ſenſe, (but here is the malignity of the diſeaſe, it cannot be ſerious, it always raves) what will it be? *O I can take no reſt.* (The way of wickedneſs is called *a way of pain*: Sinners would find it ſo, if the violence of the diſeaſe had not bereft them of ſenſe.) *Nothing ſavors with me, I can take comfort in nothing. The wicked is as a troubled Sea,* (*as their name imports*) *that cannot reſt.* Whoſe waters, &c. The Image of God, renewed in holineſs and righteouſneſs, is health reſtored after ſuch a conſuming ſickneſs; which, when we awake, when all the drowſineſs that attends our diſeaſe is ſhaken off, we find to be perfect. *The fear of the Lord* (an ordinary paraphraſe of holineſs or piety) is ſaid to be health to the navel, and marrow to the bones. Our Lord Jeſus invites *wearied ſinners to come to him, to take his yoke on them, to learn of him,* (that is, to imitate him, *to be like him*) and promiſes they *ſhall finde reſt to their ſouls.* How often do we find *grace*, and peace in conjunction in the Apoſtles ſalutations and benedictions? We are told that the wayes of divine wiſdom (*i. e.* which it preſcribeth) are all *pleaſantneſs and peace.* That in keeping the *Commandments* of God, *is great reward,*

* Τυμωλιων ἡμῶν τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἀπὸ τῆς ἁμαρτίας ἀσθενὲς ἐν ἑαυτῷ γίνεται, καὶ μικρὸν μὲν ἐπὶ μικρὸν ἀνακλᾶται, μικρὸν δὲ ἐπὶ μικρὸν ἀναβλύζει, καὶ ὥσπερ ἐν σώματι νοσοῦντι ἡ ἐπὶ θάτερα κλίσις, οὕτως ἐπὶ τῆς ψυχῆς ἡ μεταβολή, &c. Max. Tyr. diſſert. 41.

ירקעצב Pſal. 139.24. Iſ. 57. לשש *Hinc illud & tædium & diſplicentia ſui & nuſquam reſidentis animi vexatio* & *ſtatio* & Sen. de Tranquil. animi.

Matth 11 28.

Pro. 3. 13. Pſal 19. 1 Joh. 5.3.

*reward.* That *they are not grievous* (i. e. for there seems to be a Meiosis in the expression, are joyous pleasant.) And what are his Commandments, but those expresses of himself, wherein we are to be *like him*, and conform to his will? *The Kingdom of God* (that holy order which he settles in the spirits of men; his Law transcribed and impress upon the soul, which is nothing else but its conformation and likeness to himself) *is righteousness, and then peace.* The φρόνημα Πνεύματος, (That *notion*, and *judgment*, and *savour* of things, that excellent temper of mind and heart (for that is the extent of the expression) whereof the holy Spirit of God is both the author, and pattern) *is life*, and *peace*; involves them in it self. When one thing is thus in *casu recto*, predicated of another, it speaks their most intimate connexion, as *Rom.* 14, 7. above, so 1 *Joh.* 5. 3. This is love that, &c. So here, such a mind is life, and peace (though the copula be not in the original, it is fitly supply'd in the translation) you cannot separate (*q. d.*) life, and peace from such a mind. It hath no principle of death, or trouble in it. Let such as know any thing of this blessed temper, and complexion of soul; compare this Scripture, and their own experience together, when, at any time, they find their souls under the blessed Empire, and dominion of a Spiritual mind; when wholly spirituality rules and denominates them: are not their souls the very region of life and peace? both these in conjunction, *life* and *peace*, not raging life, not stupid

Rom. 14. 17.

Rom. 8. 6.

ſtupid peace; but a placid peaceful life, a vital vigorous reſt and peace; 'tis not the life of a furie, nor peace of a ſtone: Life that hath peace in it, and peace that hath life in it. Now can the ſoul ſay, *I feel my ſelf well*; all is now well with me, nothing afflicts the Spiritual mind, ſo far, and while 'tis ſuch: 'Tis wrapt up, and cloath'd in its own innocency, and purity, and hereby become invulnerable, not liable to hurtful impreſſions; Holineſs (under the name of light, for that is by the context the evident meaning of the word there) is by the Apoſtle ſpoken of as the Chriſtians *armour*. *Put on*, ſaith he, *the armour of light* (in oppoſition to the works of darkneſs which he had mentioned immediately before) *ſtrong armour*! that a man may ſee through. A good mans armour is, that *he needs none*, his armour is an open breaſt; that he can expoſe himſelf, is fearleſs of any harm. *Who is he that ſhall harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?* It ſhould be read *imitators*, ſo the word ſignifies, and ſo, where as *following* is either of a *pattern*, or an *end*, the former muſt be meant hear by the natural importance of that word and hence, by [*that which is good*] is not to be underſtood *created goodneſs*; for 'tis not enough to *imitate* that goodneſs, for ſo we muſt *be* good, but the words are capable of being read, *him that is good*, or (which is all one) *the good*. * And ſo 'tis the *increate good*, the bleſſed God himſelf, formally, conſidered under the notion of good. Nothing can harm you; if you be *like God*, thats the plain ſenſe of

*Invulnerabile eſt non quod non feritur, ſed quod non lædi-tur. Sen. de conſtantiâ ſapientis, ſive quòd in ſapientem non cadit injuria.*

Rom. 12. 12. *Integer vitæ ſcelerisque purus, &c.* Hor. Muſſat.

Τὸ ἀγαθὸν.

* As *Plato* and his followers uſed the expreſſion τἀγαθὸν fully, according to the ſenſe of *Matt.* 19. 17

of this Scripture. Likeneſs to God is armour of proof, *i. e.* an imitation of him, *viz.* in his moral goodneſs, which holineſs (as a general name of it) comprehends. A perſon truly like God is ſecure from any external violence, ſo far as that it ſhall never be able to invade his Spirit. He is in Spirit far raiſed above the tempeſtuous, ſtormie region, and converſes where winds and clouds have no place.

Nor can (ſo far as this temper of ſoul prevails) any evil grow up to ſuch a mind within it ſelf. *It is life and peace*; It is *light*, and *purity*; for 'tis the image, the ſimilitude of God. *God is light, and with him is no darkneſs at all.* Holy ſouls were *darkneſs, but they are light in the Lord.* He the Father of lights, *They the children of light. They were darkneſs*; not in the dark; but (in the abſtract) [darkneſs] as if that were their whole nature; and they nothing elſe but an impure maſſe of conglobated darkneſs. So, *ye are light*, as if they were *that*, and nothing elſe, nothing but a Sphere of light.

1 Joh. 1.

Eph. 5. Jam. 1.

Σφαῖρα ψυχῆς εὐλογιδὴς ὅταν μήτε ἐκτείνηται ἐπίτι, μήτε ἔσω συστρέχῃ, μήτε συνιζάνῃ, ἀλλὰ φωτὶ λάμπηται, &c.

Marc. Antonin. lib. 11.

Why, ſuppoſe we ſuch a thing, as an entire Sphere of nothing elſe but pure light; what can work any diſturbance here? or raiſe a ſtorm within it? A calm, ſerene thing; perfectly homogeneous, void of contrariety, or any ſelf-repugnant quality, how can it diſquiet it ſelf?

We cannot yet ſay, that thus it is, with holy ſouls in their preſent ſtate, according to the higheſt literal import of theſe words, *ye are light.* But thus it will be, when they awake, when

when they are satisfied with this likeness: They shall then be like God fully, and throughout. O the joy and pleasure of a soul made after such a similitude! Now glory is become as it were *their being*, they are glorified. *Glory is revealed into them*, transfused throughout them. Every thing that is conceivable under the notion of an excellency, competent to created nature, is now to be found with them, and they have it inwrought into their very beings. So that in a true sense it may be said (that *they are light*) they not only *have* such excellencies, but they *are* them. As the Moralist saith of the wise, or vertuous man, that he not so properly *hath* all things, as is all things. 'Tis said of man, in respect of his *naturals*, he *is* the image *and glory of God*. As for his *supernatural excellencies*, though they are not *essential to man*, they are more *expressive of God*, and are now become so *inseparable* from the nature of man too, in this his glorified state, that he can as soon cease to be *intelligent*, as *holy*. The image of God, even in this respect, is not separable from him: nor blessedness (surely from this image. As the divine excellencies, being in their infinite fulness in God, are his own blessedness; so is the likeness, the participation of them in the soul that now bears this image, its blessedness. Nothing can be necessary to its full satisfaction, which it hath not in it self, by a gracious vouchsafement, and communication. *The good man* (in that degree which his present state admits of) *Solomon* tells us *is satisfied from himself*; he doth not need to tra-

*Omnia non tam habere quam esse.* Sen.

1 Cor. 11. 7.

Prov. 14 14.

traverse the world, to seek his happiness abroad. He hath the matter of satisfaction (even that goodness which he is now enriched with) in his own breast and bosom; yet he hath it all by participation from the *fountain goodness*. But that *participated goodness* is so intimately one with him, as sufficiently warrants and makes good the assertion; *he is satisfied from himself*, viz. from himself, not *primarily*, or *independently*; but by derivation from him, who *is all in all*, and *more intimate to us, than we to our selves*; and what is that participated goodness, but a degree of the *divine likeness*? But when that goodness shall be fully participated, when this image, and imitation of the divine goodness shall be compleat, and intire; then shall we know the rich exuberant sense of those words. How fully will this image or likeness satisfie then?

*Intimus noster is intimior. Esse nostrum laudabis.* Gibl. de lib. ex Plat. & Aug.

And yet more distinctly we may apprehend how satisfying this likeness (or image impress) will be, if (a little further deferring the view of the particulars of this likeness which we have designed to instance in) we consider these general properties of it.

1. *'Tis a vital image*, not the image only of him that lives; *the living God*; but it is his *living and soul quickning image*. 'Tis the likeness of him, in that very respect, an imitation, and participation of the life of God, by which, once revived, the soul lives that was dead before. 'Tis not a dead picture, a dumb shew, an unmoving Statue; but a living, speaking, walking image; that wherewith the Child is like

like the Father: the very life of the ſubject where it is, and by which it lives *as God*, ſpeaks and acts comformably to him. An image, not ſuch a one as is drawn with a Pencil, that expreſſes only colour, and figure, but ſuch a one as is ſeen in a Glaſs, that repreſents life, and motion (as was noted from a worthy Author before.) 'Tis even (in its firſt and more imperfect draught) an analogical participation (as we muſt underſtand it) of the *divine* nature, before which firſt tincture, thoſe preludious touches of it upon the Spirit of man: his former ſtate is ſpoken of as an *alienation from the life of God*; as having no intereſt, no communion therein. The putting *on of the new man*, which *after God is created in righteouſneſs, and true holineſs*, is preſently mentioned, in direct oppoſition to that diſmal ſtate; implying that, to be a participation of the divine life. And certainly ſo far as it is ſo, 'tis a participation of the divine bleſſedneſs too.

*Sic oculos ſic ille manus, ſic ora ferebat.*

2 Pet. 1 4.

Ephes 4 18.

V. 23, 24.

2. *'Tis an image moſt intimate therefore to its ſubject.* Glory it is; but not a ſuperficial skin-deep glory; ſuch as ſhone in *Moſes* his face, which he covered with a Vail. 'Tis *strongly transformative*; changes the ſoul throughout; not in external appearance, but in its very nature. All outward imbelliſhments, would add little felicity to a putrid corrupt ſoul. That would be but painting a Sepulchre. *This* adds *ornament* unto *life*, and both, eſpecially, to the inward man. 'Tis not *paint in the face*, while *death* is at the *heart*; but 'tis the radica-

tion of ſuch a principle within, as will ſoon form and attemper the man univerſally to it ſelf. 'Tis glory, bleſſedneſs *participated*, brought home and lodged in a mans own ſoul, in his own boſom; he cannot then but be ſatisfied. A man may have a rich ſtock of outward comforts, and while he hath no heart to enjoy them, be never the happier. But 'tis impoſſible that happineſs ſhould be thus lodged in his Soul, made ſo intimate, and one with him, and yet, that he ſhould not be ſatisfied, not be happy.

3. *An image connatural to the Spirit of man.* Not a thing *alien*, and forraign, to his nature, put into him purpoſely, as is were to torment and vex him; but an ancient well-known inhabitant, that had place in him from the beginning. Sin is the injurious intruder, which therefore puts the ſoul into a commotion, and permits it not to reſt, while it hath any being there. This Image calms it, reſtores it, works a peaceful orderly compoſure within, returns it to it ſelf, to its priſtine bleſſed ſtate being reſeated there, as in its proper primitive ſubject.

* As may be ſeen by comparing what *Eſtius* ſays to the two queſtions. *An gratia facit ſupernaturalis? 2. utrum & gratia ſit talis ac ſit habitus infuſus naturalis?* l. 2. d ſt 25

For though this image, in reſpect of corrupted nature, be *ſupernatural*; in reſpect of inſtitute, and undefiled nature it was, in a true ſenſe, *natural* (as hath been demonſtrated by divers of ours againſt the Papiſts; and upon the matter yielded by ſome of the more moderate, among themſelves. * At leaſt it was *connate* with humane nature; *conſentaneus* to it, and perfective of it. (We are ſpeaking it muſt

must be remembred of that part of the divine Image that consists in moral excellencies, there being another part of it, as hath been said, that is even in the strictest sense, natural. )

There is nothing in the whole moral Law of God (in conformity where unto this Image did, *ab origine* consist) nothing of what he requires from man, that is at all distructive of his being; prejudicial to his comforts, repugnant to his most innate principles; nothing that clashes with his reason; or is contrary to his interest; or that is not, most directly, conservative of his being, and comfort, agreeable to his most rational principles, subservient to his best and truest interest. For what *doth God the Lord require but fear and love*, service, and holy walking, from an intire and undivided Soul? What? but what is good, not only in it self, but for us, and in respect whereof his Law, is said to be *holy, just, and good.* Deut. 10 12. Mich. 6. 8. Rom. 7. 12.

And what he *requireth*, he *impresseth. This Law, written in the heart*, is this *likeness.*

How grateful then will it be, when, after a long extermination and exile, it returns and repossesses the Soul; is recognized by it, becomes to it *a new nature* (yea even a divine) *a vital, living Law? The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus.* What grievance, or burden is it to do the dictates of nature? actions that easily, and freely flow from their own principles; and when blessednes it self is infolded in those very acts and inclinations? Rom 8. 2.

How infinitely satisfying and delightful will it be, when the soul shall find it self connaturallized to every thing of its duty, and shall have no other duty incumbent on it than to be happy! when it shall need no arguments, and exhortations to love God, nor need be urged and prest, as heretofore to mind him, to fear before him. When love, and reverence, and adoration, and praise, when delight, and joy shall be all natural acts. Can you separate this in your own thoughts from the highest satisfaction?

4. *This Image will be now perfect.* Every way fully perfect.

First, *In all its parts*; as it is in the first instant of the souls entrance into the state of regeneration (the womb of Grace knows no defective maimed births.) And yet here is no little advantage, as to this kind of perfection; For now those lively lineaments of the new creature *all appear*, which were much obscured before; every line of glory is conspicuous; every character legible; the whole entire frame of this Image is in its exact Symmetrie, and apt proportions, visible at once. And 'tis an unspeakable addition to the pleasure of so excellent a temper of Spirit, that accrews from the discernable intireness of it. Heretofore some gracious dispositions have been to seek (through the present prevalence of some corruption or temptation) when there was most need and occasion for their being reduced into act. Hence the reward and pleasure of the act, and improvement of the principle were

were loſt together. Now the Soul will be *equally diſpoſed* to every holy exerciſe, that ſhall be ſuitable to its ſtate. Its temper ſhall be *even*, and *Symmetral*; Its notions *uniform*, and agreeable; nothing done out of ſeaſon. Nothing ſeaſonable omitted, for want of a preſent diſpoſition of Spirit thereto. There will be not only an *habitual*, but *actual intireneſs* of the frame of holineſs in the bleſſed Soul.

2. Again, this Image will be *perfect in degree*; ſo as to *exclude* all degrees of its contrary; and *include* all degrees of it ſelf. There will now be no longer any colluctation with contrary principles; no law in the members warring againſt the law of the mind, No luſtings of the fleſh againſt the Spirit. That war is now ended in a glorious victory, and eternal peace. There will be no remaining blindneſs of mind, nor errour of iudgement, nor perverſeneſs of will, nor irregularity or rebellion of affections. No ignorance of God, no averſation from him, or diſaffection towards him. This likeneſs removes all culpable *diſſimilitude* or *unlikeneſs*. This communicated glory fills up the whole ſoul, cauſes all clouds and darkneſs to vaniſh; leaves no place for any thing that is vile or inglorious; 'tis pure glory, free from mixture of any thing that is alien to it.

And it is it ſelf *full*. The Soul is repleniſh't not with airy, evanid ſhadows, but with ſubſtantial, ſolid glory, a maſſie, mighty glory, (for I know not but ſubjective glory may be 2 Cor. 4 17.

taken in within the significancy of that known Scripture, if it be not more principally intended in as much as the Text speaks of a glory to be wrought out by afflictions, which are the files and furnaces, as it were, to polish or refine the Soul into a glorious frame.) 'Tis cumulated glory, glory added to glory. Here 'tis growing progressive glory; we are changed into the same image from glory to glory. It

2 Cor. 3 18. shall now be stable, consistent glory; that carries a self-fulness with it (which some include also in the notion of purity *) 'tis *full of it self*, includes every degree requisite to its own perfection. God hath now put the last hand to this glorious Image, added to it its ultimate accomplishments. Now, a conformity to Christ, even in the resurrection from the dead, in his glorious state is fully attained. That prize of the high calling of God is now won. And the humble sense of not having *attained as yet*, and of not being *already perfect*, in which humility, the foundations of the temple of God in a Saint is laid, and the building raised, is turned into joyful acclamations, *Grace, Grace* for the laying on of the top stone, the finishing of this glorious work.

* *Parum est quod est plenum sui, & quod minimum habet alieni.*

And when this Temple is filled with the glory of the Lord, the soul it self replenished with the divine fulness, will not its joy be full too? For here is no sacrifice to be offered, but that of praise, and joy is the proper seasoning for that sacrifice.

Now the new creature hath arrived to *the measure*

*meaſure of the ſtature* of a perfect man in Chriſt Jeſus. The firſt formation of this Spiritual (as well as of the natural) man was hidden and ſecret, it was curiouſly wrought, and in a way no more liable to obſervation, than that of framing the Child in the Womb; as that is as hidden as the concoction of Minerals, or precious ſtones in the lower parts of the earth: (no ſecrets of Nature can outvie the the Myſteries of godlineſs) Its *growth* is alſo by very inſenſible degrees; as it is with the products of nature; but its arrival to perfection is infinitely more ſtrange, than any thing in nature ever was, how ſudden and wonderful is the change! when in the twinkling of an eye, the bleſſed ſoul inſtantly awakes out of drowſie languiſhings, and miſerable weakneſs, into perfect ſtrength, and vigour!

*As a man is, ſo is his ſtrength*; and as his ſtrength is, ſo is his joy, and pleaſure. The Sun is ſaid to go forth *as a ſtrong man, rejoycing to run his race.* When a man goes in the fulneſs of his ſtrength upon any enterprize, how do blood and ſpirits triumph beforehand, no motion of hand, or foot is without a ſenſible delight. The ſtrength of a mans Spirit is unſpeakably more than that of the outward man: Its faculties and powers more refined and raiſed; and hence are rational or intellectual exerciſes and operations, much more delightful than corporal ones can be. Pſal. 19.

But (ſtill as the man is, ſo is his ſtrength) 'tis an incomparably greater ſtrength that attends the *heaven-born man.* This man *born*

*of God*, begotten of God after his own likeness. This *Hero*, this Son of God, was born to Conflicts, to Victories, to Triumphs. While he is yet but in his growing age, *he overcomes the world*: (as *Hercules* the Serpents in his Cradle) overcomes the wicked one, and is at last more than Conquerour. A mighty power attends godliness, *a Spirit of power, and of a sound mind*: but how much this divine creature grows, so much the more like God, and being perfect, Conflicts cease: (he had overcome, and won the Crown before.) And now all his strength runs out into acts of pleasure. Now, when he shall go forth in his might to love God (as we are required to love him now with all our might) and every act of *praise* shall be an act of *power*; done with a fulness of strength (as 'tis said their praises at the bringing home of the Ark, were with all their might) O! what will the pleasure be that shall accompany this state of perfection. Perfect power, and perfect pleasure are here met, and shall for ever dwell together, and be alwayes commensurate to one another. They are so here, in their imperfect state; our feeble, spiritless duties, weak, dead prayers, they have no more sweetness than strength; no more pleasure, than power in them. Therefore we are listless, and have no mind to duties, as we find we are more frequently destitute of a spiritual livelyness and vigour therein. When a spirit of might, and power goes on with us in the wonted course of our converses with God; we then forecast

forecaſt opportunities, and gladly welcome the ſeaſon; when it *extraordinarily* occurs, of drawing nigh to him. It cannot be thought that the connexion and proportion between theſe ſhould fail in glory, or that when every thing elſe is perfect: The bleſſed Soul it ſelf made perfect, even as God himſelf is perfect (this bearing his likeneſs) ſhould be unlike him in bliſs; or its ſatisfaction be imperfect. Matth. 5.

## CHAP. VIII.

*The ſatisfaction carried* in the glory of God impreſſed, *further ſhew'n by inſtances. Certain particulars of this impreſſion inſtanc't in. A dependent frame of Spirit. Subjection, or ſelf-devoting, Love, Purity, Liberty, Tranquility.*

BUt beſides the *general* conſideration *of this likeneſs*, we ſhall inſtance in ſome of the particular excellencies comprehended in it. Wherein the bleſſed ſhall imitate, and reſemble God. Whence we may further eſtimate the pleaſure and ſatisfaction that *being like God* will afford. Only here let it be remembred, that as we all along in this diſcourſe, ſpeak of likeneſs to God in reſpect of *moral excellencies*; So by likeneſs to him in reſpect of *theſe*, we underſtand not only *a participation* of thoſe which are *communicable*;

*cable*; but a *correspondent impresse* also, as to those that are *incommunicable*, as hath been more distinctly opened, in the Propositions concerning this likeness: Which being premised I shall give instances of both kinds, to discover somewhat of the inexpressible pleasure of being thus conformed to God.

And here, pretermitting the impresse of knowledge, of which we have spoken under the former head of vision, we shall instance.

1. *In a dependent frame of Spirit*; which is the proper impress of *the divine all-sufficiency, and self-fulness* duly apprehended by the blessed soul. It is not easie to conceive a higher pleasure, than *this*, competible to a creature, *The pleasure of dependence*. Yea this is a higher than we can conceive. Dependence (which speaks the creatures χλσις or habitude to its principle as the subserviency which imparts its habitude to its end, is twofold.

1. *Natural*, which is common and essential to all creatures; Even when no such thing is thought on, or considered by them. The Creatures live, move, and have their beings in God whether they think of it or no.

2. *Voluntary* or *rational*, which is *de facto*, *appropriate*; and *de jure*; common to reasonable creatures as such. A dependence that is, ἐκπροαιρετικὸς. Elective, and with a foregoing reason, (which I understand by elective, not a liberty of doing or not doing it) and concomitant consideration of what we do, and animadversion of our own act, when knowingly

ingly and willingly, underſtanding our ſelves in what we do, *we go out of our ſelves and live in God.* This is the dependence of which I ſpeak. And it cannot but be attended with tranſcendent pleaſure in that other State, when that knowledge and animadverſion ſhall be clear and perfect. Both, as this dependence imports.

A { Nullifying of ſelf. / Magnifying (I may call it omnifying) of God, a making him all in all.

As it imports (which it doth moſt evidently) a ſelf-annihilation. A pure nullifying of ſelf. 'Tis a continual recognition of my own nothingneſs. A momently, iterated confeſſion, that my whole being is nothing but a meer puff of precarious breath, a bubble rais'd from nothing by the arbitrary fiat of the great Creator, reducible, had he ſo pleaſed, any moment to nothing again. Theſe are true and juſt acknowledgments; and to a well-tempered ſoul infinitely pleaſant, when the ſtate of the ca is throughly underſtood (as now it is) and it hath the apprehenſion clear, how the creation is ſuſtained, how, and upon what terms its own being, life, and bleſſedneſs are continued to it; that it is, by its ſelf, nothing, and that it is every moment determinable upon the conſtancy of the Creators Will, that it is not *ſimply nothing.* 'Tis not poſſible that any thing ſhould hinder this conſideration from being eternally delightful; but that diabolical uncreaturely *Pride*, that is long ſince baniſht Heaven, and baniſht its very ſubjects thence alſo.

also. Nothing can suite that temper but *to be a God*; to be wholly independent; to be its own sufficiency. The thoughts of living at the will and pleasure of another, are grating; but they are only grating to a proud heart, which here hath no place. A soul naturallized to humiliations, accustomed to prostrations, and self-abasements, trained up in acts of mortification, and that was brought to glory, through a continued course, and series of self-denyall: That ever since it first came to know it self was wont to depend for every moments breath, for every glimpse of light, for every fresh influence (*I live yet not I*---) with what pleasure doth it now as it were vanish before the Lord! what delight doth it take to diminish it self, and as it were *disappear* to contract and shrivel up it self; to shrink even into a point, into a nothing, in the presence of the divine glory, that it may be *all in all*. Things are now *pleasant* (to the soul, *in its right-mind*) as they are *suitable*; as they carry a comlinesse and congruity in them. And nothing *now* appears more *becoming*, than such a self-annihilation. The distances of *Creator* and *Creature*, of *Infinite* and *Finite*, of *a necessary* and *arbitrary* being, of *a self-originated* and *a derived* being of what was *from everlasting*, and what *had a beginning*, are now better understood than ever. And the soul by how much it is now come *nearer* to God, is more apprehensive of its *distance*. And such a frame, and posture doth hence please it best, as doth most fitly correspond thereto. Nothing is so pleasing to it as to be

Gal 2. 20.

as

*as it ought.* That temper is most *grateful* that is most *proper*, and which best agrees with its state. Dependence therefore is greatly pleasing, as it is *a self-nullifying thing*. And yet it is, in this respect, pleasing, but as a means to a further end. The pleasure that attends it *is higher* and more intense, according as it more *immediately* attains that end, *Viz.*

*The magnifying and exalting of God*; which is the most connatural thing to the holy soul. The most fundamental and deeply *impress* Law of the New Creature. *Self gives* place that God may take it, becomes *nothing*, that he may be *all*. It vanishes, that his glory may shine the brighter.

Dependence gives God his *proper glory*. 'Tis the peculiar honour and prerogative of a *Deity*, to have a world of Creatures hanging upon it, staying themselves upon it: to be the *fulcrum*, the *centre* of a lapsing Creation. When this dependence is *voluntary* and *intelligent*, it carries in it a more explicite owning and acknowledgment of God. By how much more this is the distinct and actual sense of my soul: *Lord, I cannot live but by thee*, So much the more openly and plainly do I speak it out, *Lord, thou art God alone*, thou art *the fulness of life and being, the only root and spring of life, The Everlasting I Am. The being of beings.*

How unspeakably pleasant to a holy soul will such a perpetual agnition or acknowledgment of God be, when the perpetuation of its being, shall be nothing else than a perpetuation of this acknowledgment; when every renewed

newed aspiration, every motion, every pulse of the glorified soul, shall be but a repetition of it, when it shall find it self in the eternity of life, that everlasting state of life, which it now possesses, to be nothing else than an everlasting testimony *that God is God : He is so, for I am, I live, I act, I have the power to love him ; none of which could otherwise be.* When amongst the innumerable myriads of the heavenly hoast, this shall be the mutual alternate testimony of each to all the rest, throughout eternity will not this be pleasant? When each shall *feel* continually, the fresh illapses, and incomes of God, the power, and sweetness of divine influences, the inlivening vigour of that vital breath, and find in themselves, *thus we live and are sustained :* and are yet as secure, touching the continuance of this state of life, as if every one were *a God to himself* ; and did each one possess an intire God-head. When their sensible dependence on him, in their glorified state, shall be his perpetual triumph over all the imaginary Deities, the phansied *Numina*, wherewith he was heretofore provoked to jealousie : And he shall now have no rival left, but be acknowledged and known to be *all in all.* How pleasant will it then be, as it were to loose themselves in him ! and to be swallowed up, in the overcoming sense of his boundless, alsufficient, every where flowing fulness !

And then add to this ; they do by this dependence actually make this fulness of God their own. They are now met in one common principle

principle of life and blessedness, that is sufficient for them all. They no longer live a life of care, are perpetually exempt from solicitous thoughts which here they could not perfectly attain to in their earthly state. They have nothing to do but to *depend*, to live upon a present *self-sufficient good*, which alone is enough to repleniſh all desires; else it were not self-sufficient. * How can we divide in our most abstractive thoughts, the highest pleasure, the fullest satisfaction from this dependence! 'Tis to live at the rate of a God; a God-like life. A living upon immense fulness, as he lives.

Τὸ δὲ ἀυτάρκες πῶς ἂν διαιρεθείη ἀπὸ μονωθέντος ἀγαθοῦ τοῦ ἡδίστου καὶ μεστοῦ εὐδαιμονίας. *Arist. de mor. lib.* 1. c. 4.

2. *Subjection*; which I place next to *dependence*, as being of the same allay. The product of impreſt Soveraignty; as the *other*, of *all-sufficient fulness*: Both, impressions upon the creature, corresponding to somewhat in God, most incommunicably appropriate to him.

*This* is the souls real, and practical acknowledgement of the Supream Majesty: Its homage to its Maker: Its self-dedication: Than which nothing more suits the *state* of a *creature*, or the *Spirit* of a *Saint*. And as it is suitable, 'tis pleasant. 'Tis that by which the blessed Soul becomes, in its own sense, a consecrated thing, a devoted thing, sacred to God: Its very life, and whole *being* refer'd and made over to him. With what delightful reliſhes, what sweet gusts of pleasure is this done! while the soul tasts its own act; approves it with a full ungainsaying judgment; apprehends the con-

condignity, and fitness of it assents to its self herein; and hath the ready suffrage, the harmonious concurrence of all his powers. When the words are no sooner spoken, *Worthy art thou, O Lord, to receive glory, honour, and power, for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are, and were created*; but they are resounded from the *penetralia*, the inmost bowels, the most intimate receptacles, and secret chambers of the Soul. *O Lord, thou art worthy*; worthy, that I, and all things should *be to thee*; worthy to be the *Omega*, as thou art the *Alpha*, the *last*, as thou art the *first*; the *end*, as thou art the *beginning* of all things; the *Ocean* into which all being shall flow; as the *Fountain* from which it sprang. My whole self, and all my powers, the excellencies now implanted in my being, the priviledges of my now glorified state, are all worth nothing to me but *for thee*, please me only, as they make me fitter for thee. O the pleasure of these Sentiments, the joy of such raptures! when the soul shall have no other notion of it self, than of an *everlasting sacrifice*, always ascending to God in its own *flames*.

For this devotedness, and subjection speak not barely, an *act*, but a *state*. A *Being to the praise of grace*. A *Living to God*. And tis no mean pleasure that the sincere soul finds in the imperfect beginnings, the first Essayes of this life; the enitial breathings of such a Spirit, its entrance into this blessed state; when it makes the first tender, and *present* of it self to God (as the Apostle expresses it) when it

Rom. 12. 1.

first

first begins to esteem it self an *hallowed thing*; separate, and set apart for God. Its first act of unfeigned self-resignation; when it tells God from the very heart, *I now give up my self to thee to be thine.* Never was marriage covenant made with such pleasure, with so complacential consent. This quitting claim to our selves, parting with our selves upon such terms, to be the Lords for ever: O the peace, the rest, the acquiescence of Spirit that attends it! When the poor soul that was weary of it self, knew not what to do with it self, hath now on the sudden found this way of disposing it self to such an advantage! there is pleasure in this Treaty. Even the previous breakings and relentings of the soul towards God are pleasant. But, O the pleasure of consent! of *yielding our selves to God*, as the Apostles expression is: when the Soul is overcome, and cryes out, *Lord, now I resign, I yield, possess now thy own right, I give up my self to thee.* That *yielding* is subjection, self-devoting; in order to future service, and obedience. (*To whom ye yield your selves servants to obey*, &c.) And never did any man enrol himself, as a servant, to the greatest Prince on earth, with such joy. What pleasure is there in the often iterated recognition of these transactions: in multiplying such bonds upon a mans own soul (though done faintly, while the fear of breaking, checks its joy in taking them on.) When in the uttering of these words, *I am thy servant, O Lord, thy servant, the son of thine handmaid*; (i. e. thy born servant, alluding to that

Rom. 6. 13.

V. 16.

Psal. 116. 16.

Pſ. 119 38. cuſtom and Law among the *Jews.*) Thy ſervant devoted to thy fear, a man finds they *fit* his ſpirit, and are aptly expreſſive of the true ſenſe of his ſoul; is it not a grateful thing? And how pleaſant is a ſtate of life conſequent and agreeable to ſuch tranſactions and Covenants with God! when 'tis meat and drink to do his will. When his zeal eats a man up; and one ſhall find himſelf ſecretly conſuming for God! and the vigour of his ſoul exhaled in his ſervice! Is it not a pleaſant thing ſo to ſpend and be ſpent? when one can in a meaſure find that his will is one with Gods, tranſformed into the divine will; that there is but one common will, and intereſt, and end between him and us; and ſo that in *ſerving God, we reign with him*; in ſpending our ſelves for him, we are perfected in him. Is not this a pleaſant life? Some Heathens have ſpoken at ſuch a rate of this kind of life as might make us wonder, and bluſh. One ſpeaking of a vertuous perſon; "ſaith, he is as a good Souldier that "bears wounds, and numbers skars, and at laſt, "ſmitten through with darts, dying, will love "the Emperour, for whom he falls; he will "(ſaith he) keep in mind that ancient pre-"cept, *follow God.* But they that complain, "cry out and groan, and are compelled by "force to do his commands, and hurried into "them againſt their will, and what a madneſs "is it (ſaith he) to be drawn rather than "follow? And preſently after ſubjoyns, we are "born in a Kingdom; to obey God is liberty. The ſame perſon writes in a Letter to a friend: "If

*Seneca de vitâ beatâ*, lib. 15. *Et ut beatus miles feret vulnera, &c.*

"If thou believe me when I moſt freely "diſcover to thee the moſt ſecret fixed being "of my ſoul, in all things my mind is thus "formed: I obey not God ſo properly as I aſ- "ſent to him. I follow him with all my heart, "not becauſe I cannot avoid it. "And ano- "ther, Lead me to whatſoever I am appointed, "and I will follow thee chearfully, but if I "refuſe, or be unwilling, I ſhall follow not- "withſtanding. Epiſt. 96. Epictet. Enchir.

A Soul caſt into ſuch a mould, formed into an obediential ſubject frame, what ſweet peace doth it enjoy! how pleaſant reſt! every thing reſts moſt compoſedly in its proper place. A bone out of joynt knows no eaſe, nor lets the body enjoy any. The creature is not in its place but when 'tis thus *ſubject*, is in this ſubordination to God. By flying out of this ſubordination, the world of mankind is become one great diſjoynted body; full of weary toſſings, unacquainted with eaſe, or reſt. That ſoul that is but in a degree reduc't to that bleſſed ſtate & temper, is as it were in a new world; ſo great, and happy a change doth it now feel in it ſelf. But when this transformation ſhall be compleated in it; and the will of God ſhall be no ſooner known than reſted in: with a complacential approbation; and every motion of the firſt and great mover ſhall be an *efficacious law* to guide and determine all our motions: and the leſſer-wheeles ſhall preſently run at the firſt impulſe of the great and maſter-wheel, without the leaſt rub or heſitation; when the law of ſin ſhall no longer check the law of

God; when all the *contentions* of a *rebellious* fleſh; all the counter-ſtrivings of a perverſe, ungovernable heart, ſhall ceaſe for ever; O unconceivable bleſſedneſs of this conſent, the pleaſure of this joyful harmony, this peaceful accord!

Obedience, where 'tis due but from one creature to another, carries its no ſmall advantages with it, and conducibleneſs, to a pleaſant, unſolicitous life. To be particularly preſcribed to, in things about which our minds would otherwiſe be toſt with various apprehenſions, anxious, uncertain thoughts; how great a priviledge is it! I cannot forget a pertinent paſſage of an excellent perſon of recent memory. "And (ſaith he) for pleaſure I "ſhall profeſs my ſelf ſo far from doting on "that popular Idol, *liberty*, that I hardly think "it poſſible for any kind of obedience to be "more painful than an unreſtrained liberty. "Were there not true bounds of Magiſtrates, "of Laws, of piety, of reaſon in the heart, "every man would have a fool, I add, a "mad Tyrant to his Maſter, that would mul-"tiply him more ſorrows, than bryars and "thorns did to *Adam*, when he was freed from "the *bliſs* at once and the *reſtraint* of Paradiſe; "and was, ſure, greater ſlave in the wilder-"neſs, than in the incloſure; would but the "Scripture permit me that kind of Idolatry, "the binding my faith, and obedience to any "one viſible infallible Judg or Prince, were it "the Pope, or the Mufti, or the grand Tar-"tar; might it be reconcilible with my *Creed*, "it would be certainly with my *intereſt*, to "get

Dr. *Hamond's* Sermon of Chriſts eaſie yoke.

"get preſently into that poſture of obedience:
"I ſhould learn ſo much of the *Barbarian* Am-
"baſſadors in *Appian*, which came on pur-
"poſe to the *Romans* to negotiate for leave to
"be their ſervants. 'Twould be my *policy*,
"if not my *piety*, and may now be my *wiſh*,
"though not my *faith*, that I might never have
"the trouble to *deliberate*, to *diſpute*, to *doubt*,
"to *chuſe* (thoſe ſo many profitleſs uneaſine-
"ſes) but only the favour to receive com-
mands, and the meekneſs to obey them. How
pleaſurable then muſt obedience be to the per-
fect will of the bleſſed God, when our wills
ſhall alſo be perfectly attempered and conform-
ed there unto! Therefore are we taught, Thy
will be done in earth as it is in heaven. What
is moſt perfect in its kind gives rule to the
reſt.

Perfectiſſimum in ſuo genere eſt menſura reliquorum.

3. *Love.* This is an eminent part of the image or likeneſs of God in his Saints; As it is that great Attribute of the divine being that is, *alone*, put to give us a notion of God. *God is love.* This is an excellency (conſider it whether in its original, or copie) made up of pleaſantneſſes. All love hath complacency or pleaſure in the *nature*, and moſt *formal notion* of it. To ſearch for pleaſure in love, is the ſame thing as if a man ſhould be ſolicitous to find water in the Sea, or light in the body of the Sun. *Love to a friend* is not without high pleaſure, when eſpecially he is actually preſent, and injoye'd. *Love to a Saint* riſes higher in nobleneſs, and pleaſure, according to the more excellent qualification of its ob-

1 Joh. 4. 8, 16.

ject

ject. 'Tis now in its higheſt improvement, in both theſe aſpects of it, where whatſoever tends to gratifie our nature, whether as *humane*, or *holy*, will be in its full perfection. Now doth the ſoul take up its ſtated dwelling in Love, even in God who is Love; and as he is Love; 'tis now encloſed with Love, encompas'd with Love, 'tis converſant in the proper region, and element of Love. The Love of God is now perfected in it: That Love which is not only participated from him but terminated in him, That *perfect Love* caſts out tormenting Fear. So that here is pleaſure without mixture. How naturally will the bleſſed ſoul now diſſolve and melt into pleaſure! It is new fram'd on purpoſe for Love-imbraces, and injoyments. It ſhall now love like God, as one compoſed of Love. It ſhall no longer be its complaint and burden that it cannot retaliate in this kind; that being beloved it cannot love.

1 John 4.

4. *Purity.* Herein alſo, muſt the bleſſed ſoul reſemble God, and delight it ſelf. Every one that hath this hope (viz. *of being hereafter like God, and ſeeing him as he is*) purifieth himſelf as he is pure. A God-like purity is intimately connext with the *expectation* of future bleſſedneſs, much more with the *fruition*. *Bleſſed are the pure in heart*; beſides the reaſon there annext [for they ſhall ſee God] (which is to be conſidered under the other head, the pleaſure unto which this likeneſs diſpoſes) that propoſition carries its own reaſon in it ſelf. It is an incomparable pleaſure that *purity* carries

carries in its *own nature*; As ſin hath in its very nature (beſides its conſequent guilt and ſorrow) trouble and torment beyond expreſſion. Whatſoever defiles doth alſo diſturb. Nor do any but pure pleaſures deſerve the name. An Epicurus himſelf will tell us, there cannot be *pleaſure* without *wiſdom*, *honeſty*, and *righteouſneſs*. 'Tis leaſt of all poſſible there ſhould, when once a perſon ſhall have a right knowledge of himſelf, and (which is moral impurity whereof we ſpeak) the filthineſs of ſin. I doubt not but much of the torment of Hell, will conſiſt, in thoſe too-late, and deſpairing ſelf-loathings, thoſe ſickly reſentments, the impure wretches will be poſſeſſed with, when they ſee what hideous deformed monſters their own wickedneſs hath made them. Here the gratifications of ſenſe that attend it, bribe and ſeduce their judgments into another eſtimate of ſin; but *then*, it ſhall be no longer thought of under the more favourable notion of a γλυκύπικρον, they ſhall taſte nothing but the gall and wormwood.

Whoſe Doctrine, as to this matter of pleaſure, is not ſo much to be blamed as his practiſe, if both rightly repreſented to us. οὐκ ἔστιν ἡδέως ζῆν ἄνευ τοῦ φρονίμως καὶ δικαίως. *Ex Cicer. 1. de fin.*

'Tis certainly no improbable thing, but that reaſon, being now ſo fully rectified, and undeceived, vizors torn off, and things now appearing in their own likeneſs; ſo much will be ſeen, and apprehended of the intrinſique evil and malignity of their viliated natures, as will ſerve for the matter of further torment: while yet ſuch a ſight can do no more to a change of their temper than the Devils faith doth to theirs; Such ſights, being accompanied with their no hope of ever attaining a better

ſtate, do therefore no way tend to mollifie, or demulce their Spirits, but to increaſe their rage and torment.

It is however out of queſtion, that the purity of heaven will infinitely inhance the pleaſure of it; For 'tis more certain the intrinſical goodneſs of holineſs (which term I need not among theſe inſtances, in as much as the thing admits not of one entire notion, but lies partly under this head, partly under the ſecond, *that of devitedneſs to God*) will be fully underſtood in Heaven, than the intrinſecal evil of ſin in Hell: And when it is underſtood, will it not affect? will it not pleaſe? Even here, how pleaſing are things to the pure (but in degree ſo) that participate of the divine purity. *Thy word is very pure* (ſaith the Pſalmiſt) *therefore thy ſervant loveth it.* Under this notion do holy ones take pleaſure each in other, becauſe they ſee ſomewhat of the divine likeneſs, their Fathers image, in one another; will it not be much more pleaſing to find it each one perfect in himſelf? to feel the eaſe, and peace, and reſt, that naturally goes with it. A man that hath any love of cleanlineſſe, if caſually plung'd into the mire, he knows not what to do with himſelf; he phanſies his own cloaths to abhor him (as *Job* rhetorically ſpeaks) ſo doth as natural a pleaſure attend purity: It hath it even in it ſelf. *The words of the pure* (ſaith the Wiſe-man) *are pleaſant words*, (words of pleaſantneſſes it might be read.) That pure breath that goes from him, is not without a certain pleaſurableneſs accompanying

Pſ. 119. 140.

Job 9.

Prov. 15 26.

companying it. And if so to another, much more to himself, especially when every thing corresponds; and (as the expression is) he finds himself *clear throughout*.

5. *Liberty*; (Another part of the Divine likeness, wherein we are to imitate God) cannot but be an unspeakable satisfaction. Supposing such a state of the notion of liberty as may render it really a perfection. Which otherwise it would be a wickedness to impute to God, and an impossibility to partake from him.

I here speak of the *moral liberty* of a *Saint* as such, not of the *natural liberty* of a *man*, as a man: and of the *liberty consummate* of Saints in glory; not of the *inchoate*, imperfect *liberty* of Saints on earth.

And therefore the intricate controversies about the liberty of the humane will, lye out of our way, and need not give us any trouble.

'Tis out of question that this Liberty consists not (what ever may be said of any other) in an equal propension to good or evil, nor in the wills independency on the practical understanding; nor in a various, uncertain mutability, or inconstancy; nor is it such as is opposed to all necessity, 'tis not a liberty from the government of God * nor from a determination to the simply best, and most eligible Objects.

But it is a liberty from the servitude of sin; from the seduction of a misguided Judgment; and the allurement of any insnaring, forbidden Objects, consisting in an unbounded amplitude and

* Which is a no more desirable state than that which I remember the Historian tells us was the condition of the Armenians, who having cast off the government that was over them, became *Incerti, soluti; & magis sine domino quam in libertate* Tacit. An. l. 2.

and inlargedneſs of ſoul towards God, an indetermination to any inferiour good, reſulting * from an intire ſubjection to the divine will; a ſubmiſſion to the order of God's and ſteady adherence to him. And unto which the many deſcriptions and elogies agree moſt indiſputably, which from ſundry Authors are congeſted together by *Gilieuf*, * in that ingenious Tractate of Liberty.

* *Libertas noſtra non eſt ſubjectio ad Deum formaliter ſed amplitudo conſequuta eam.* Gibieuf. *De libert. dei & creaturæ. lib.* 1. *c.* 32.

*As that he is free that lives as he will* (from *Cicero*, inſiſted on by *S. Aug. de Civit. Dei lib.* 14. *c.* 25.) that is, who neither wiſhes any thing, nor fears any thing; who in all things acquieſces in the will of God; who minds nothing but his own things, and accounts nothing his own but God, who ſavors nothing but God, who is mov'd only by the will of God.

*Id. ibid.* Again; *he is free, that he cannot be hindred being willing, nor forced being unwilling* (from *Epictetus*) i. e. *who hath always his will*; as having perfectly ſubjected it to the will of God (as the ſame Author explains himſelf.

*Again*; *He is free that is maſter of himſelf* (from the *Cilians*) *i. e.* (as that liberty reſpects the ſpirit of a man) that hath a mind independent on any thing forreign, and alien to himſelf.

*That only follows God* (from *Philo Judæus*) *That lives according to his own reaſon* (from *Ariſtotle*) with many more of like import; that alone, do fully, and perfectly ſute that ſtate of liberty the bleſſed ſoul ſhall hereafter eternally enjoy; as that Author often acknowledges.

This

This is *the glorious Liberty of the Children of God. The Liberty wherewith the Son makes free. Liberty indeed*, meaſured, and regulated by the *royal Law of Liberty*, and which is perfected only in a perfect conformity thereto. There is a moſt ſervile * Liberty, a being (*a*) free from righteouſneſs, which, under that ſpecious name and ſhew (*b*) *inſlaves a man to corruption*; and there is as *free a ſervice*, by which a man is ſtill the more free by how much the more he ſerves, and is ſubject to his ſuperiours will, and governing influences: and by how much the leſſe poſſible it is, he ſhould ſwerve therefrom *.

* *Quam inuxere ſibi adjuvant ſervitutem. Et ſunt, quodammodo propriâ Libertate captivi. Boeth. ex Gib. Nollit quâ valeat tribi cattenam. Sen. Trag.*

(*a*) Rom. 6 20.

(*b*) 2 Pet. 2.

* *Liberior quò divinæ gratiæ ſubjectior Primum Liberum arbitrium quod ho nisi datum eſt quando primum creatus eſt rectus, potuit non peccare; ſed potuit & peccare. Hoc autem noviſſimum eò potentius erit, quò peccare non potuit. Aug. de Civitat. Dei lib. 22. c. 30.*

The neareſt approaches therefore of the ſoul to God; Its moſt intimate union with him, and intire ſubjection to him, in its glorified ſtate, makes its liberty conſummate. Now is its deliverance compleat, its bands are fallen off, tis perfectly diſentangled from all the ſnares of death, in which it was formerly held; 'tis under no reſtraints, oppreſt by no weights, held down by no cloggs. It hath the free exerciſe of all its powers; hath every faculty and affection at command. How unconceivable a pleaſure is this! With what delight doth the poor priſoner entertain himſelf, when his manacles and fetters are knockt off! when he's enlarged from his loathſom dungeon, and the houſe of his bondage, breaths in a free air! can

can dispose of himself, and walk at liberty whither he will. The bird escaped from his Cage; or freed from his Line, and Stone, that resisted its ruine and too feeble struglings before, how pleasantly doth it range, (with what joy doth it clap its wings, and take its flight! A faint Emblem of the joy, wherewith that pleasant chearful note shall, one day, be sung and chanted forth. *Our soul is escaped, as a bird out of the snare of the Fowler, the snare is broken, and we are escaped.* There is now no place for such a complaint. I *would, but I cannot*, I would turn my thoughts to glorious objects, but I cannot. The blessed soul feels it self *free* from all confinement; nothing resists its will; as its will doth never resist the will of God. It knows no limits, no restraints; is not tyed up to this or that particular good, but expatiates freely, in the immense universal all comprehending goodness of God himself.

*Libertas nostra inhæret divinæ, ut exemplari, & in perpetuâ ejus imitatione versatur, sive ortum, sive progressum, sive consummationem ejus intuemur, libertas nostra, in ortu, est capacitas Dei. In progressu libertas res est longe clarior; progressu enim attenditur propius accessus hominis ad Deum; qui quidem non locali propinquitate sed imitatione & assimilatione constat & est utique, imitatione, & assimilatione, secundum quam sint Deus est sublimis, & ex-*

And this liberty, is the perfect Image and likeness of the liberty of God, especially, in its consummate state. In its progress towards it, it increases as the Soul draws nearer to God: which nearer approach is not in respect of place, or local nearness, but likeness, and conformity to him; in respect whereof, as God is most sublime and excellent in himself, so is it in him.

*exteliſat ſeipſo; ita homo eſt ſublimis, & exceſſus Deo, & altitudo ejus Deus eſt ut inquit D. Auguſtinus. Conſummatio denique libertatis eſt, cum homo in Deum, felicissimo gloriæ cœleſtis ſtatu, transformatur; & deus omnia illi eſſe incipit? Qui quidem poſtremus ſtatus, to differt à priore -- quippe homo tum non modo inalligatus eſt creaturis, ſed nec circa illas negotiatur, etiam reverenda in finem--nec in creaturis ſe infundit, nec per illas procedit, ut faciebat cum eſſet viator; ſed in ſolo Deo, & conquieſcit & effundit ſe placidiſſimè, & motû ejus, cum ſit ad præſentiſſimum, & conjunctiſſimum bonum, ſimilior eſt quieti, quàm motui*, Gib. *l.*2. *c.* 14.

Its conſummate liberty is; when it is ſo fully transformed into the likeneſs of God, as that he is *all* to it, as to himſelf. So that as he is an infinite *ſatisfaction* to himſelf; his likeneſs in this reſpect, is the very *ſatisfaction* it ſelf, of the bleſſed ſoul.

6. *Tranquility.* This alſo is an eminent part of that aſſimilation to God, wherein the bleſſedneſs of the holy Soul muſt be underſtood to lye: a perfect compoſure, a perpetual and everlaſting calm, an eternal vacancy from all unquietneſs or perturbation. Nothing can be ſuppoſed more inſeparably agreeing to the nature of God than this: Whom Scripture witneſſes to be *without variableneſs or ſhadow of change*. There can be no commotion without mutation, nor can the leaſt mutation have place in a perfectly ſimple, and uncompounded nature: Whence even *Pagan* reaſon hath been wont to attribute the moſt undiſturbed and unalterable tranquility to the nature of God. *Balaam* knew it was incompatible to him to *lye, or repent*. And (ſuppoſing him to ſpeak this from

*Omnes turbulæ tempestates quæ procul à Deorum cœlestium tranquilitate exulant, &c.* Apuleius de Deis Socratis.

a present inspiration) it is their common Doctrine concerning God. *Any the least troubles and tempests* (saith one) *are far exiled from the tranquility of God for all the inhabitants of heaven do ever injoy* the same stable *tenour, even an eternal quality of mind.* And a little after speaking of God, saith he, *'tis neither possible he should be moved by the force of another, for nothing is stronger than God; nor of his own accord, for nothing is perfecter than God.*

——Ἐν τούτοις πῶν φύσιων τέλειον τὸν θεὸν τακτέον; ἆρα οὐκ ἐν τοῖς ἀσωμάτοις καὶ ἀδιαστάτοις, καὶ ἀπαλλαγμένοις τῆς ῥεύμασος τούτου, &c. *Max. Tyr. disser.* 1. *Quod desideras autem, magnum, summum est,* Deoq; vicinum, *non concuti.* Sende tranquil. Animi.

And whereas there is somewhat that is mutable, and subject to change, somewhat that is stable and fixt, *in which of those natures* (saith another) *shall we please God; must we not in that which is more stable and fixt, and free from this fluidness and mutability? for what is there among all beings, that can be stable or consist, if God do not by his own touch, stay and sustain the nature of it?*

Hence is it made a piece of *deformity*, of likeness to God, by another, who tells his friend; *It is an high and great thing which thou desirest: and even bordering upon a Deity, not to be moved.*

Yea, so hath this Doctine been insisted on by them, that, (while other Divine perfections have been less understood) it hath occasioned *the Stoical assertion of fatality*, to be introduced, *on the one hand*, and *the Epicurian negation of providence* on the other; least any thing should be admitted that might seem repugnant to the tranquility of their *Numina*.

But we know that our God doth whatsoever pleaseth

pleaſeth him both in heaven and earth; and that he doth all according to the wiſe counſel of his holy will; *freely*, not *fatally* upon the eternal previſion, and foreſight of all circumſtances and events, ſo that nothing can occur that is new to him; nothing that he knows not how to improve to good; or that can therefore infer any alteration of his counſels; or occaſion to him the leaſt perturbation, or diſquiet in reference to them.

Holy ſouls *begin*, herein, to imitate him; as ſoon as they firſt give themſelves up to his wiſe and gracious conduct. 'Tis enough that he is wiſe for himſelf and them. Their hearts *ſafely* truſt in him. They commit themſelves with unſollicitous confidence, to his guidance, knowing he *cannot* himſelf be miſ-led, and that he will not miſ-lead them. As *Abraham* followed him, not knowing whether he went: and thus by *faith*, they enter into his reſt.

They do, now, in their preſent ſtate, only *enter* into it; or hover about the borders. Their future aſſimilation to God in this; gives them a ſtated ſettlement of Spirit in this reſt. They *before* did owe their tranquillity to their *faith*, *now* to their actual *fruition*. Their *former* acquieſcency, and ſedate temper was hence, that they believed God *would* deal well with them at laſt; their *preſent*, for that he *hath* done ſo. Thoſe words have now their fulleſt ſenſe (both as to the *reſt* it ſelf, which they mention; and the *ſeaſon* of it) *Return to thy reſt, O my ſoul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* The *occaſions of trouble*, and a Pſal. 116.

*paſſive*

*passive temper of Spirit*, are ceased together. There is now no fear without, nor terror within. The rage of the world is now allay'd, it storms no longer. Reproach and persecution have found a period. There is no more dragging before Tribunals, nor haling into Prisons; no more running into dens, and deserts; or wandring to and fro in Sheep-skins, and Goat-skins. And with the cessation of the external occasions of trouble, the inward dispositions thereto are also ceased: All infirmities of Spirit, tumultuating passions, unmortified corruptions, doubts, or imperfect knowledge of the love of God, are altogether vanished and done away for ever.

And indeed, that perfect cure, wrought within, is the souls great security, from all future disquiet. A well tempered Spirit hath been wont strangely to preserve its own peace in this unquiet world. *Philosophy* hath *boasted* much in this kind; and *Christianity* performed more.

*Sen. de tranquill. anim.*

The Philosophical (γαλήνη, or) calmness of mind, is not without its excellency and praise; "That stable settlement and fixedness "of Spirit; that ἐυθυμία (as the moralist tells "us it was wont to be termed among the Gre- "cians, and which he calls Tranquillity;) "when the mind is alwayes equal, and goes a "smooth even course, is propitious to it self, "and beholds the things that concern it with "pleasure, and interrupts not this joy, but "remains in a placid state, never at any time "exalting or depressing it self. But how far doth

doth the *Christian peace* surpass it, *that peace which passeth all understanding*; that amidst surrounding dangers enables the holy soul to say (without a proud boast) *none of all these things move me.* The peace that immediately results from that faith which unites the soul with God, and fixes it upon him as its firm *basis*; when 'tis *kept in perfect peace, by being stay'd upon him, because it trusts in him. When the heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord, filled full of joy, and peace, or of joyous peace* (by an ἐν βεβαιότητι) *in believing.* Phil. 4. 7. Act. 20. 24. Isa. 26. 3. Psal. 112. 7. Rom. 15. 13.

And if Philosophy and (which far transcends it) Christianity, Reason and Faith have that statique power, can so compose the soul and reduce it to so quiet a consistency, in the midst of storms and tempests: how perfect and contentful a repose, will the immediate vision, and injoyment of God afford it, in that serene and peaceful region, where it shall dwell for ever, free from any molestation from without, or principle of dis-rest within!

## CHAP. IX.

*The Pleaſure ariſing from* knowing or conſidering our ſelves to be like God: *from conſidering it,* 1. *Abſolutely.* 2. *Comparatively, or reſpectively to the former ſtate of the ſoul. To the ſtate of loſt ſouls. To its pattern. To the way of accompliſhment. To the ſouls own expectations. To what it ſecures. The Pleaſure whereto it diſpoſes, of union, communion. A compariſon of this Righteouſneſs, with this Bleſſedneſs.*

2. HEre is alſo to be conſidered, *the pleaſure and ſatisfaction involv'd in this aſſimilation to God, as it is known, or reflected on, or that ariſes from the* cognoſci *of this likeneſs.*

We have hitherto diſcourſed of the pleaſure of *being like God*, as that is apprehended, *by a ſpiritual ſenſation*, a feeling of that inward rectitude, that happy pleaſure of ſouls now perfectly reſtored. We have yet to conſider a further pleaſure, which acrews from the ſouls animadverſion upon it ſelf; its contemplating its ſelf thus happily transformed. And though that very ſenſation be not without ſome animadverſion (as indeed no ſenſible perception can be performed without it) yet we muſt conceive a conſequent animadverſion, which is much more explicite, and diſtinct; and which

which therefore yields a very great addition of Satisfaction and delight. As when the bleſſed ſoul ſhall turn its eye upon it ſelf, and deſignedly compoſe, and ſet it ſelf to conſider its preſent ſtate and frame, the conſideration it ſhall now have of it ſelf, and this likeneſs impreſt upon it, { Abſolute, or Comparative & reſpective. may be either

1. Abſolute. How pleaſing a ſpectacle will this be, when the glorified ſoul ſhall now intentively behold its own glorious frame? When it ſhall dwell in the contemplation of it ſelf? view it ſelf round on every part, turn its eye from glory to glory, from beauty to beauty, from one excellency to another; and trace over the whole draught of this image; this ſo exquiſite piece of divine workmanſhip, drawn out in its full perfection, upon it ſelf. When the glorified eye, and divinely enlightned, and inſpirited mind ſhall apply it ſelf to criticize, and make a judgment upon every ſeveral lineament, every touch and ſtroke, ſhall ſtay it ſelf, and ſcrupulouſly inſiſt upon every part? view at leiſure every character of glory the bleſſed God hath inſtamp't upon it; how will this likeneſs now ſatisfie! And that expreſſion of the bleſſed Apoſtle (taken notice of upon ſome other occaſion formerly) [The glory to be *revealed* in us] ſeems to import in it a reference to ſuch a ſelf intuition. What ſerves *revelation* for, but in order to *viſion*? What is it but an *expoſing things to view*? and what is revealed *in us*, is chiefly expoſed to *our own view*.

All the time from the the Souls first conversion till now, God hath been as it were at work upon it. (*--He that wrought us to*, &c.) hath been labouring it, shaping it, polishing it, spreading his own glory upon it, inlaying, inameling it with glory; now at last the whole work is revealed, the Curtain is drawn aside; the blessed Soul awakes. Come now saith God, *behold my work*; see what I have done upon thee; Let my work now see the light, I dare expose it to the *censure* of the most curious eye, let thine own have the *pleasure* of beholding it. It was a work carried on in a Mystery secretly wrought (as in the lower parts of the earth, as we alluded before) by a Spirit that came, and went no man could tell how. Besides, that in the general only, we knew *we should be like him*, it did not yet appear what we should be, *now it appears*. There is a revelation of this glory. O the ravishing pleasure of its first appearance! and it will be a glory always fresh and flourishing (as *Job's* expression is, *my glory was fresh in me*) and will afford a fresh, undecaying pleasure for ever.

2 Cor. 5. 5.

2. The blessed soul may also be supposed to have a comparative and respective consideration of this impressed glory. That is, so as to compare it with, and refer it to several things that may come into consideration with it: and may so heighten its own delight in the contemplation thereof.

1. If we consider this impression of glory in reference to *its former loathsome deformities* that were

were upon it; and which are now vanished and gone. How unconceivable a pleasure will arise from this comparison? when the soul shall consider at once *what it is*, and what once it was, and thus bethink it self. I that did sometimes bear the accursed image of the *Prince of darkness*, do now represent and partake of the holy pure nature of the *Father of lights*. I was a meer Chaos, an hideous heap of Deformity, Confusion and Darkness; *But he that made light to shine out of darkness, shined into me to give the knowledge of the light of his own glory in the face of Jesus Christ*, and since, made my way *as the shining light shining brighter and brighter unto this perfect day*. I was an habitation of Dragons, a Cage of noisom lusts; that as Serpents, and Vipers were winding to and fro through all my faculties and powers; and preying upon my very vitals. Then was I hateful to God, and an hater of him; sin, and vanity had all my heart. The charming invitations, and allurements of grace were as musick to a dead man; to think a serious thought of God, or breath forth an affectionate desire after him, was as much against my heart, as to pluck out mine own eyes, or offer violence to mine own life.

2 Cor. 4. 6.

Prov. 4 18.

After I began to live the Spiritual new life; how slow, and faint was my progress and tendency towards perfection? how indisposed did I find my self to the proper actions of that life? To go about any holy spiritual work, was, too often, as to climb an Hill, or strive against the stream; or as an attempt to fly

without wings. *I* have sometime said to my heart; *Come now lets go pray, love God, think of heaven*; but O how listless to these things! how lifeless in them! Impressions made, how quickly lost! gracious frames, how soon wrought of and gone! characters of glory rac'd out, and overspread with earth and dirt! Divine comeliness hath now at length made me perfect. *The glory of God* doth now incloath me, they are his ornaments I now wear. He hath made me, that, lately, *lay among the pots, as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold*, he hath put another nature into me; the true likeness of his own holy divine nature; He hath now perfectly master'd and wrought out the enmity of my heart against him. Now to be with God is my very element. Loving, admiring, praising him are as natural, as breathing once was. I am all Spirit and life, I feel my self disburthened, and unclogg'd of all the heavy oppressive weights that hung upon me. No *body of death* doth now incumber me, no deadness of heart, no coldness of love, no drowsie sloth, no averseness from God, no earthly mind, no sensual inclinations or affections, no sinful devisions of heart between God and Creatures. He hath now the whole of me. I injoy and delight in none but him, O blessed change! O happy day!

2. *If in contemplating it self, cloathed with this likeness it respect the state of damned souls.* What transports must that occasion! What ravishing resentments! When it compares humane

humane nature in its higheſt perfection, with the ſame nature in its utmoſt depravation? An unſpeakably more unequal compariſon than that would be of the moſt amiable lovely perſon, flouriſhing in the prime of youthful ſtrength and beauty, with a putrified rotten carcaſſe, deformed by the corruption of a loathſome grave. When glorified Spirits ſhall make ſuch a reflection as this. Lo here we ſhine in the glorious brightneſs of the divine Image; and behold yonder deformed accurſed ſouls. They were as capable of this glory as we. Had the ſame nature with us; the ſame reaſon, the ſame intellectual faculties and powers; but what monſters are they now become? They eternally hate the eternal excellency. Sin and death are finiſhed upon them. They have each of them an hell of horror and wickedneſs in it ſelf. Whence is this amazing difference! Though this cannot but be an awful wonder, it cannot alſo, but be temper'd with pleaſure and joy.

3. *We may ſuppoſe this likeneſs to be conſidered in reference to its pattern*; and in compariſon therewith, which will then be another way of heightning the pleaſure that ſhall ariſe thence. Such a frame and conſtitution of Spirit is full of delights in it ſelf: but when it ſhall be refer'd to its *original*, and the correſpondency between the one, and the other be obſerv'd and view'd; how exactly they accord, and anſwer each other as face doth face in the water; this cannot, ſtill, but add pleaſure to pleaſure, one delight to another. When the

bleſſed ſoul ſhall, interchangeably turn its eye to God, and it ſelf; and conſider the agreement of *glory*, to *glory*; the ſeveral *derived* excellencies to the *original*. He is wiſe, and ſo am I, holy and ſo am I. I am now made perfect as my heavenly Father is; this gives a new reliſh to the former pleaſure. How will this likeneſs pleaſe under that notion, *as it is his*; a likeneſs to *him*. O the accent that will be put upon thoſe appropriative words to be made partakers of [His] holineſs, and of the [divine] nature. Perſonal excellencies, in themſelves conſidered, cannot be reflected on but with ſome pleaſure: but to the ingenuity of a child, how eſpecially, grateful will it be, to obſerve in it ſelf, ſuch and ſuch graceful deportments, wherein it naturally imitates its father. So he was wont to ſpeak, and act, and demean himſelf: how natural is it *unto love*, to affect, and aim at the imitation of the perſon loved: So natural it muſt be, to take complacency therein; when we have hit our mark, and atchiev'd our deſign. The purſuits and attainments of love are proportionable, and correſpondent each to other.

And what heart can compaſs the greatneſs of this thought, *to be made like God!* Lord, was there no lower pattern than thy ſelf, thy glorious bleſſed ſelf according to which to form a worm! This cannot want its due reſentments in a glorified ſtate.

4. *This tranſformation of the bleſſed ſoul into the likeneſs of God, may be viewed by it, in reference to the way of accompliſhment*; as an *end*, brought about

about by ſo amazing ſtupendous means? which will certainly be a pleaſing contemplation. When it reflects on the method and courſe inſiſted on, for bringing this matter to paſs, views over the work of redemption, in its tendency to this end, *The reſtoring God's Image in ſouls*; Conſiders Chriſt manifeſted *to us*, in order to his being revealed and formed *in us*. That God was made in the likeneſs man, to make men after the likeneſs of God. That he partook with us of the *humane nature*, that we might with him partake of the *divine*; that he aſſumed our fleſh, in order to impart to us his Spirit. When it ſhall be conſidered for this end had we ſo *many great and precious promiſes*; for this end did the glory of the *Lord ſhine upon us through the glaſs of the Goſpel*; *that we might be made partakers*, &c. *That we might be changed*, &c. Yea, when it ſhall be called to mind, (though it be far from following hence, that this is the only or principal way wherein the life and death of Chriſt have influence in order to our eternal happineſs) that our Lord Jeſus lived for this end, that we might learn ſo *to walk, as he alſo walked*, that he dyed that we *might be conformed to his death*; *that he roſe again*, that we might with him *attain the reſurrection of the dead*; that he was in us the *hope of glory*, that he might *be in us* (that is, that ſame Image that bears his Name) our final conſummate glory it ſelf alſo. With what pleaſure will theſe harmonious congruities, theſe apt correſpondencies, be look'd into at laſt!

Phil. 2. 7.

2 Pet. 1. 4.

2 Cor. 3. 18.

Now may the glorified Saint ſay, I here ſee the

the end the Lord Jesus came into the world for. I see for what he was *lift up*, made a spectacle; that he might be *a transforming one*. What the effusions of his Spirit were for; why it so earnestly strove with my way-ward heart. I now behold in my own soul, the fruit of the travel of his Soul. This was the project of redeeming love, the design of all-powerful Gospel grace. Glorious atchievement! blessed end of that great, and notable undertaking! happy issue of that high design!

5. *With reference to all their own expectations and endeavours.* When it shall be considered by a Saint in glory; the attainment of this perfect likeness to God, was the utmost mark of all my designs, and aims; the term of all my hopes and desires. This is that *I* long'd, and laboured for, that which I pray'd and waited for: which I so earnestly breath'd after, and restlestly pursu'd. It was but *to recover the defaced image of God. To be again made like him, as once I was.* Now I have attained my end; I have the fruit of all my labour and travels; I see now the truth of those (often) incouraging words, *Blessed are they that hunger, and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Be not weary of well doing, for ye shall reap, if ye faint not.* What would I once have given for a steady abiding frame of holiness, for an heart constantly bent and biassed toward God; constantly serious, constantly tender, lively, watchful, heavenly, spiritual, meek, humble, chearful, self-denying. How have I cryed and striven for this to get such an heart! such

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a temper of spirit! how have I pleaded with God, and my own soul in order hereto. How often over have *I* spread this desire before the Searcher and Judge of hearts; *Turn me out of all my worldly comforts, so thou give me but such an heart; Let me spend my dayes in a Prison, or a Desert, so I have but such a heart; I refuse no reproaches, no losses, no tortures, may I but have such a heart.* How hath my soul been sometimes ravisht with the very thoughts of such a temper of Spirit, as hath appeared amiable in my eye, but I could not attain? and what a torture again hath it been that I could not? What grievance in all the world, in all the dayes of my vanity; did I ever find comparable to this; *To be able to frame my self by Scripture, and rational light and rules, the Notion and Idea of an excellent temper of spirit, and then to behold it, to have it in view, and not be able to reach it,* to possess my soul of it? What indignation have I sometimes conceived against mine own soul, when I have found it wandring and could not reduce it; hovering, and could not fix it; dead, and could not quicken it; low, and could not raise it! How earnestly have I expected this blessed day, when all those distempers should be perfectly healed, and my Soul recover an healthy, lively spiritual frame? What fresh ebullitions of joy will here be, when all former desires, hopes, indeavours, are crowned with success and fruit! This joy is the joy of Harvest. *They that have sown in tears, do now reap in joy. They that went out weeping, bearing precious seed; now with* Psal 126. 6.

*with rejoycing bring their sheaves with them.*

*6. In reference to what this impress, likeness shall for ever secure to it: an everlasting amity and friendship with God, that it shall never sin, nor be ever frown more.* 1. *That it shall sin no more.* The perfected image of God in it, is its security for this; for 'tis holy throughout; in every point conformed to his nature and will. There remains in it nothing contrary to him. It may therefore certainly conclude it shall never be liable to the danger of doing any thing but what is good in his sight; and what solace will the blessed soul find in this? If an Angel from Heaven should assure it, that from such an hour it should sin no more, the world would not be big enough to hold such a soul. It hath now escaped the deadliest of dangers, the worst of deaths (and which even in its present state, upon more deliberate calmer thoughts it accounts so) the sting of death, the very deadly head of death, the Hell of Hell it self. The deliverance is now compleat which cannot but end in delight and praise.

2. That God can never frame more. This 'tis hence also assured of: How can he but take perfect everlasting complaceny in his own perfect likeness and image; and behold with pleasure, his glorious workmanship, now never liable to impairment, or decay? how pleasant a thought is this! The blessed God never beholds me but with delight. I shall alwayes behold his serene countenance; his amiable face, never covered with any clouds,

clouds, never darkened with any frown. "I "shall now have cause to complain no more; "my God is a stranger to me, he conceals "himself, I cannot see his face, so he is in-"compast with Clouds and darkness, or with "flames and terrours. These occasions are for ever ceased. God sees no cause either to *behold* the blessed soul with displeasure, or with displeasure to avert from it, and turn off his eye. And will not this eternally satisfie? when God himself is so well pleased, shall not we?

2. The pleasure it disposes to. Besides that *the inbeing, and knowledge of this likeness*, are so satisfying: It disposes, and is the souls qualification for a yet further pleasure. That *of closest union, and most inward communion with the blessed God.*

1. *Union.* Which (what it is more then relation) is not till now compleat. Besides *relation* it must needs import *presence*; not *Physical*, or *Local*, for so nothing can be nearer God, then it is but moral, and *cordial*, by which the holy soul with *will and affections*, guided by rectified reason, and judgment, closes with, and imbraces him, and he also upon wise forelaid counsel, and with infinite delight, and love imbraceth it: so friends are said to be one (besides their relation as friends) by an union of hearts. An union between God and the creature, as to kind and nature higher than this, and lower than Hypostatical or personal union I understand not, and therefore say nothing of it *.

But as to the union here mentioned; as, till the

* I would fain know what the Tertium shall be, resulting from the Physical union some speak of.

the image of God be perfected, it is not compleated; so it cannot but be perfect then: When the soul is perfectly formed according to Gods own heart; and fully participates the divine likeness, is perfectly like him; that likeness cannot but infer the most intimate union that two such natures can admit. That is (for nature) *a love-union*; such as that which our Saviour mentions, and prayes to the Father to perfect between themselves, and all believers, and among believers mutually, with one another. Many much trouble themselves about this Scripture; but sure that can be no other then *a love-union*: For, (1.) 'Tis such an union as Christians are capable of among themselves, (for surely he would never pray that they might be one with an union whereof they are not capable.) (2.) 'Tis such an union as may be made visible to the world. Whence 'tis an obvious corollary, *that the union between the Father and the Son, there spoken of, as the pattern of this, is not their union or oneness in essence*, (though it be a most acknowledged thing, that there is such an essential union between them) for who can conceive that Saints should be one among themselves, and with the Father, and the Son, with such an union as the Father, and the Son are one themselves, if the essential union between Father and Son were the union here spoken of? But the *exemplary or pattern-union*, here mentioned, between Father and Son, is but an union in mind, in love, in design, and interest; wherein he prayes that Saints on earth might *visibly* be one with them also

Joh. 17. 21. ver. 11.

Ver. 21.

also; *that the world might believe, &c.*

'Tis yet a rich pleasure that springs up to glorified Saints from that *love-union* (now perfected) between the blessed God and them. 'Tis mentioned and shadowed in Scripture, under the name and notion of marriage-union; in which the greatest mutual complacency is always supposed a necessary ingredient. To be thus joyned to the Lord, and made, as it were, one Spirit with him; For the eternal God to cleave in love to *a nothing creature*, as his likeness upon it ingages him to do, is this no pleasure, or a mean one? 1 Cor. 6, 16.

2. *Communion*, unto which that union is fundamental; and introductive; and which follows it upon the same ground, from a natural propensity *of like to like*: There is nothing now to hinder God, and the holy soul of the most inward fruitions and injoyments: no animosity, no strangeness, no unsuitableness on either part. Here the glorified Spirits of the just have liberty to [illegible] themselves, amidst the rivers of pleasure at Gods own right hand, without check or restraint. They are pure, and these pure. They touch nothing that can defile, they defile nothing they can touch. They are not now forbidden the neerest approaches to the (once) inaccessible Majesty, there's no Holy of Holies into which they may not enter, no dore lockt up against them: They may have free admission into the innermost secret of the divine presence, and pour forth themselves in the most liberal effusions of *love and*

*and joy*, as they muſt be the eternal ſubjects of thoſe infinitely richer communications from God, even of *immenſe and boundleſs love and goodneſs*.

Do not debaſe this pleaſure by low thoughts; nor frame too daring *poſitive* apprehenſions of it. 'Tis yet a ſecret to us. The eternal converſes of the King of glory, with glorified Spirits, are onely known to himſelf and them. That expreſſion (which we ſo often meet in our way) *It doth not yet appear what we ſhall be*; ſeems left, on purpoſe, to check a too curious and prying inquiſitiveneſs into theſe unrevealed things. The great God will have his reſerves of glory, of love, of pleaſure for that future ſtate. Let him alone a while, with thoſe who are already received into thoſe manſions of glory, thoſe everlaſting habitations. He will find a time for thoſe that are yet pilgrims and wandring exiles to aſcend and enter too.

In the mean time what we know of this communion may be gathered up into this general account, *The reciprocation of loves*: the flowing and reflowing of everlaſting love, between the bleſſed ſoul and its infinitely bleſſed God: Its egreſs towards him, his illapſes into it.

Unto ſuch pleaſure doth this likeneſs diſpoſe and qualifie: You can no way conſider it, but it appears a moſt pleaſurable ſatisfying thing.

Thus far have we ſhewn the *qualification* for this bleſſedneſs, and the *nature* of it, *What it prerequires*,

*prerequires*, and *wherein it lyes*, and how highly congruous it *is* that the former of these should be made a prerequisite to the latter, will sufficiently appear to any one, that shall, in his own thoughts, compare *this righteousness* and *this blessedness* together. He will indeed plainly see, that the natural state of the case, and habitude of these each to other, makes this connexion unalterable, and eternal; so as that it must needs be simply impossible to be *thus blessed*, without being *thus righteous*.

For what is this righteousness other than *this blessedness begun*, the seed and principle of it? And that with as exact proportion (or rather sameness of Nature) as is between the grain sown, and reaped, which is more than intimated in that of the Apostle, *Be not deceived, God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap: For he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption*: (there is the same proportion too) *but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting*: Which though it be spoken to a particular case, is yet spoken from a general rule and reason applicable a great deal further. Gal. 6 7 8.

And as some conceive (and is undertaken to be demonstrated) that the seeds of things are, not *virtually* only, but *actually*, and *formally* the very things themselves; so is it here also. The very parts of this *blessedness* are discernable in this *righteousness*. The *future vision of God*, in *present knowledge* of him; for this knowledge, is a real, initial part of righteousness. The rectitude of the mind, and Dr. Harv. de Ov.

apprehensions concerning God, consisting in conformity to his revelation of himself.

*Present holiness*, including also the future *assimilation to God*. And the *contentment, and peace* that attends it, the *consequent satisfaction in glory*.

But as in glory, the *impression of the divine likeness*, is that which *vision subserves*; and whence *satisfaction results*; so is it here (visibly) the main thing also. The end, and design of the Gospel revelation, * of whole Christianity (I mean Systematically considered) of all Evangelical Doctrines, and knowledge, is to restore Gods likeness, and image; from whence *joy* and *peace* result of course, when once the Gospel is *believed*. The Gospel is the instrument of impressing Gods likeness, in order whereunto it must be *understood, and received into the mind*. Being so, the *impression upon the heart, and life*, are Christianity *habitual* and *practical*, whereupon joy and pleasure (the belief or thorough reception of the Gospel thus intervening) do necessarily ensue.

So Aptly is the only way, or method of *seeing Gods face*, so as to be *satisfied with his likeness*; said to be, *in or thorow righteousness*.

Πῶς ὖν γινόμεθα καθ' ὁμοίωσιν; διὰ τῶν εὐαγγελίων, τί δὲ χριστιανισμὸς; θεῖα ὁμοίωσις: καὶ ἡ ἐνδεχόμενον ἀνθρώπῳ φύσει.

Rom. 15.13.

Greg. Nyss. in Christi Resurrect. hom. 1. Orat. 1

CHAP.

## CHAP. X.

*The season of this satisfaction, which is twofold; at* { Death. / Resurrection.

*The former spoken to, wherein is shewn, That this life is to the soul (even of a Saint) but as a sleep. That at death it awakes. As to the latter, that there is a considerable accession to its happiness at the resurrection.*

3. THE *season of this blessedness*, comes next to be considered, which (as the words [when I awake] have been concluded here to import) must in the general be stated beyond the *time* of this present life.

Holy souls are here *truly* blessed, not *perfectly*, or their present blessedness is perfect only in *nature and kind*, not in *degree*. 'Tis *in this respect*, as far short of perfection, as their holiness is. Their hunger and thirst are *present*, their being filled is yet *future*. The experience of Saints in their best state on earth, their desires, their hopes, their sighs, and groans do sufficiently witness they are not *satisfied*, or if they be, in *point of security*, they are not in point of *enjoyment*. The completion of this blessedness is referred to a better state, as its being the *end*, *of their way*, their *rest*, *from their* labours, *the reward of their work* Matth. 5.6.

doth import, and require. Therefore many Scriptures, that speak of their present *rest, peace, repose, satisfaction*, must be understood in a comparative, not the absolute highest sense.

More particularly *in that other state*; the season of their blessedness is twofold, or there are two terms from whence (in respect of some gradual, or modal diversifications) it may be said severally to commence, or bear date. *Viz.*

The time { Of their *entrance upon a blessed immortality*, when they shall have laid down their earthly bodies *in death*. / Of *their consummation therein*, when they receive their bodies glorified, in the general resurrection.

Both these may not unfitly be signified by the Phrase in the Text [*when I awake*] For, though Scripture doth more directly apply the term of [*awaking*] to the latter; there will be no violence done to the Metaphor, if we extend its signification to the former also. To which purpose, it is to be noted, that it is not *Death*, formally, or the *disanimating of the body*, we would have here to be understood by it (which indeed sleeping would more aptly signifie than awaking) but (what is co-incident therewith in the same period) the exuscitation, and revival of the soul. When the body falls asleep, then doth the Spirit awake, and the eye-lids of the morning, even of an eternal day do now first open upon it.

1. Therefore we shall not exclude from this season

season the introductive state of blessedness, which takes its beginning from the blessed souls first entrance into the invisible state. And the fitness of admitting it will appear by clearing these two things.

1. That its condition in this life, even at the best, is in some sort but a sleep.

2. That when it passes out of it into the invisible Regions, 'tis truly said to awake.

1. Its abode in this mortal body, is but a continual sleep; its senses are bound up, a drowsie slumber possesses, and suspends all its faculties and powers.

Before the renovating change, how frequently doth the Scripture speak of sinners as men a sleep? *Let not us sleep as do others. Awake thou that sleepest, and stand up from the dead,* &c. They are in a dead sleep, under the sleep of death. They apprehend things as men asleep. How slight, obscure, hovering notions have they of the most momentous things? and which it most concerns them to have thorough, real apprehensions of. All their thoughts of God, Christ, Heaven, Hell, of Sin, of Holiness, are but uncertain, wild guesses, blind hallucinations, incoherent phansies; the absurdity, and inconcinnity whereof, they no more reflect upon then men asleep. They *know not* these things, but only *dream of them.* They put darkness for light, and light for darkness, have no senses exercised to discern between good and evil. The most substantial realities are with them meer shadowes, and chemæra's, *Phansied, and imagined dangers* startle

1 Thes. 5. 6. Ephes 5. 14.

them (as 'tis wont to be with men in a dream) *real ones*, though never so near them, they as little fear, as *they*. The creature of their own imagination, the Lion in the way, which they dream of in their slothful slumber, affrights them; but the real roaring Lion that is ready to devour them, they are not afraid of.

And conversion doth but relax, and intermit; it doth not totally break of this sleep; It, as it were, attenuates the consopiting fumes, doth not utterly dispel them. What a difficulty is it to watch but one hour? There are some lucid, and vivid intervals, but of how short continuance? how soon doth the awakened soul close its heavy eyes, and fall asleep again? how often do temptations surprize *even such*, in their slumbring fits, while no sense of their danger can prevail with them *to watch and pray* (with due care and constancy) least they enter thereinto.

* So well doth the Apostles watchword suit our case, awake to righteousness and sin not, &c. 1 Cor. 15 34.

* *Hither* are most of the sins of our lives to be imputed and referr'd, not to *meer ignorance*, that we know not sin from duty; or what will please God, and what displease him; but to a drowsie inadvertency, that we keep not our spirits in a watchful, considering posture. Our *eyes* that should be *ever towards the Lord*, will not be kept open, and though we resolve, we forget our selves; before we are aware we find our selves overtaken: Sleep comes on upon us, like an armed man, and we cannot avert it. How often do we hear, and read, and pray, and meditate as persons asleep? as if we knew not what we were about? How remark-

markable, useful providences escape either *our notice*, or *due improvement*, amidst our secure slumbers? How many Visits from heaven are lost to us, when we are (as it were) between sleeping and waking (*I sleep, but my heart waketh*) and hardly own the voice that calls upon us, *till our beloved hath withdrawn himself.* Indeed, what is the whole of our life here but a dream? The entire scene of this sensible world, but *a vision of the night?* where every man *walks but in a vain shew:* where we are mockt with shadows & our credulous sense abus'd by impostures and delusive appearances; nor are we ever secure from the most destructive, mischievous deception, further than as our souls are possest with the apprehensions that this is the very truth of our case, and thence instructed, to *consider*: and not to prefer the shadows of time, before the great realities of eternity.

Cant. 5 2.

Psal. 39 6.

Nor is this sleep *casual*, but even *connatural* to our present state, the necessary result of so strict an union, and commerce with the body, which is, to the in-dwelling Spirit, as a dormitory or charnel-house, rather than a *mansion.* A soul drench't in sensuality (a *Leike* that hath too little of fiction in it) and immur'd in a sloathful putid flesh, sleeps, as it were, by *fate*; not by *chance*; and is only capable of full relief, by suffering a Dissolution; which it hath reason to welcome as a jubilee, and in the instant of departure to sacrifice as he did * (with that ease and warrantable change, to make a Heathen expression Scriptural, *Jehovæ liberatori*)

* Viz. *Sweto.* Who at the time of his death sprinkled water upon the servants about him, *addita voce se liquorem illum libare Jovi liberatori.* Tacit. Annal.

*liberatori*) to adore and praiſe its great Deliverer. At leaſt (accounts being once made up, and a *meetneſs* in any meaſure attained for *the heavenly inheritance*, &c.) hath no reaſon to regret, or dread the approaches of the eternal day, more than we do the return of the Sun after a dark and long-ſome night. But, as the ſluggard doth nothing more unwillingly than forſake his bed, nor bears any thing with more regret, than to be awak't out of his ſweet ſleep, though you ſhould intice him, with the pleaſures of a Paradiſe, to quit a ſmoky loathſome Cottage; ſo fares it with the ſluggiſh ſoul, as if it were lodg'd in an inchanted Bed; 'tis ſo faſt held by the charms of the body, all the glory of the other world is little enough to tempt it out, than which there is not a more deplorable Symptome of this ſluggiſh ſlumbring ſtate. So deep an oblivion (which you know is alſo naturally incident to ſleep) hath ſeiz'd it of its own Countrey, of its alliances above, its relation to the Father and world of Spirits, It takes this earth for its home, where 'tis both in exile and captivity at once. And (as a Prince, ſtoln away in his infancy, and bred up in a beggers ſhed) ſo little *ſeeks*, that it *declines* a better ſtate. This is the degenerous torpid diſpoſition of a ſoul loſt in fleſh, and inwrapt in ſtupifying clay; which hath been deeply reſented by ſome Heathens. So one brings in *Socrates* pathetically bewailing this oblivious dreaming temper of his ſoul "which (ſaith he) had ſeen that pul-"chritude (you muſt pardon him, here, the

conceit

"conceit of its pre-exiſtence) that neither
"humane voice could utter, nor eye behold
"But that now, in this life, it had only ſome
"little remembrance thereof, as in a dream,
"being both in reſpect of *place*, and *condition*,
"far removed from ſo pleaſant ſights, preſt
"down into an earthly ſtation, and there en-
"compaſt with all manner of dirt and filthi-
"neſs, &c.

And to the ſame purpoſe *Plato* often ſpeaks in the name of the ſame perſon: and particularly, of the *winged ſtate*, of the good ſoul*, when apart from the body, carried in its triumphant flying Chariot (of which he gives a large deſcription, ſomewhat reſembling *Solomons* rapturous Metaphor: *Before I was aware, my ſoul made me as the Chariots of Aminnadib.*) But being in the body, 'tis with it, as with a Bird that hath loſt its wings, it falls a ſluggiſh weight to the earth. *πτέρωμα.* * In Phædro. Cant. 6. 12.

Which indeed is the ſtate even of the beſt, in a degree, within this Tabernacle. A ſleepy torpoſe ſtops their flight. They can fall, but not aſcend; the *remaines* of ſuch a drowſineſs do ſtill hang even about Saints themſelves. The Apoſtle therefore calls upon *ſuch* to *awake out of ſleep*; from that conſideration (as we know men are not wont to ſleep ſo intenſely towards morning) *that now their ſalvation was nearer then when they believed*, i. e. (as ſome judicious Interpreters underſtand that place) for that they were nearer death, and eternity than when they firſt became Chriſtians (though this paſſage be alſo otherwiſe (and Rom. 13 11. Arelius: Beza, &c.

(and not improbably interpreted.) However,

2. *The holy Souls release and dismission from its earthly body* (which is that we propounded next to be considered) *will excusse and shake off this drowsie sleep.* Now is the happy Season of its awaking into the heavenly vital light of God. The blessed morning of that long desired day is now dawned upon it; the cumbersome night-vail is laid aside, and the garments of salvation and immortal glory are now put on. It hath past through the trouble & darkness of a wearisome night, and now is joy arrived with the morning (as we may be permitted to allude to those words of the Psalmist, though that be not supposed to be the peculiar sense.) Psal. 30. 5.

I conceive my self here not concern'd, *expressly* to insist in proving that the souls of Saints sleep not in the interval, between death and the general resurrection; but enjoy present blessedness. It being besides the design of a practical discourse, which rather intends the propounding and improvement of things acknowledg'd, and agree'd for the advantage and benefit of them with whom they are so; then the discussing of things dubious and controversible. And what I here propound in order to a consequent improvement and application, should methinks pass for an acknowledg'd truth among them that professedly believe, and seriously read and consider the Bible. For meer Philosophers, that do not come into this account, 'twere impertinent to discourse with them from a Text of Scripture; and where

where my design only obliges me to intend the handling of that; and to deliver it from what may fitly be supposed to have its ground there, unless their allegations did carry with them the *Species* of demonstrating the simple impossibility of what is asserted thence to the power of that God whose word we take it to be; which I have not found any thing they say to amount to. That we have reason to presume it an acknowledged thing among them that will be concluded by Scripture; That the Soul doth not sleep when it ceases to animate its earthly body, many plain Texts do evince, which are amassed together, by the reverend Mr. *Baxter*,* some of the principal whereof I would invite any that waver in this matter seriously to consider. As the words of our Saviour to the Thief on the Cross. *This day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.* That of the Apostle, *We are willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord. And that, I am in a straight, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ.* That passage, *The Spirits of just men made perfect*, &c. Which are expressions so clear, that it is hard for an industrious Caviller to find what to except to them; and indeed the very exceptions that are put in, are so frivolous, that they carry a plain confession, there is nothing colourable to be said.

* In his Saints rest, p. 2. c. 10.

Luke 23. 43. 2 Cor. 5. 8. Phil. 1. 23. Heb. 12. 23.

'Tis true that divers of the Fathers, and others, have spoken some dubiously, some very diminishingly, of the blessedness of separate souls; many of whose words may be seen together in that elaborate Tractate of the learned *Parker, de descens. lib.* scatt. p. 77. Yea, and his own assertion in that very page (be it spoken with reverence to the memory of so worthy a person)

Yea

argues something gross, and I conceive, unwarrantable thoughts of the souls dependance on a body of Earth.

Yea and most evident it is from those Texts; not only that holy souls sleep not, in that state of separation; but that they are awaked by it (as out of a former sleep) into a much more lively, and vigorous activity, than they enjoyed before: And translated into a state, His words are, *Tertium vulnus* (speaking of the prejudices the Soul receives by its separation from the body) *omnes operationes etiam suas quæ sunt præsertim ad extra extinguit.* Where he makes it a difficulty to allow it any operations at all, as apears by the *præsertim* inserted. He first indeed denies it all operations, and then more confidently, and especially those *ad extra*. And if he would be understood to exclude it only from its operations *ad extra* (if he take operations *ad extra*, as that Phrase is wont to be taken) he must then mean by it all such operations as have *their objects*; not only those that have their *terms to which* without the Agent, *i. e.* not only all transient, but all immanent acts that have their object, without them. As when we say, all Gods acts *ad extra* are free; we mean it even of his immanent acts that have their objects without him, though they do not *pouvre terminum extra deum*: as his election, his love of the elect. And so he must be understood to deny the separate souls (and that with a *præsertim* too) the operations of *knowing God*, of loving him, and delighting in him; which are all operations *ad extra*, as having their objects *extra animam*, though their *terminus ad quem* be not so; which makes the condition of the separate souls of Saints unspeakably inferiour to what it was in the body, and what should occasion to dismal thoughts of that state of separation, I see not. Scripture gives no ground for them, but evidently enough speaks the contrary. Reason and Phylosophy offers nothing that can render the sense we put upon the forementioned plain Scriptures, self contradictions or impossible. Yea such as had no other light, or guide have thought the facility of the souls operations, being separate from its earthly body, much greater by that very separation. And upon this score doth Saint *Augustine*, with great indignation inveigh against the Philosophers (*Plato* more especially) because they judg'd the separation of the Soul from the body necessary to its blessedness. [*Quia videlicet ejus perfectam beatitudinem tunc illi fieri existimant cum omni prorsus corpore exuta, ad Deum sinplex, & sola & quodammodo nuda redierit.* De civit. Dei l. 13 c. 16.] unto which purpose the words of *Philolaus Pythagoricus*, or *Plato*, of *Porphyrius* are

*as much better then their former*, as the *tortures of a Croſs*, are more ungrateful, then *the pleaſures of a Paradiſe*; *theſe joyes* fuller of vitalitie, then *thoſe ſickly dying faintings*. As the *immediate preſence, and cloſe imbraces* of the

cited by *Ludovicus vives* in his Comment upon that bovementioned paſſage. The firſt

ſpeaking thus—*Depoſito corpore homines Deum immortalem fieri.* The ſecond thus,—*Trahi nos, à corpore, ad imas, & à cogitatione ſuperarum rerum ſubinde revocari: ideo relinquendum corpus, & hîc quantum poſſumus, & in alterâ vitâ vitâ prorſum, ut liberi, & expediti verum ipſi videamus, & optimum amemus.* The third denies—*Aliter fieri beatum quenquam poſſe, niſi relinquat corpus & effugatur Deo.* I conceive it by the way not improbable, that the ſeverity of that Pious Father againſt that Dogma of the Philoſophers, might proceed upon this ground, that what they ſaid of the impoſſibilitie of being happy in *an earthly body*, he underſtood meant by them of an impoſſibilitie to be happy *in any body at all*; when 'tis evidently the common opinion of the *Platoniſts*, that the ſoul is alwayes united with ſome body or other; and that even the *Dæmons* have bodies (aereal or etherial ones) which *Plato* himſelf is obſerved by St. *Auguſtine* to affirm whence he would faſten a contradiction on him, *ibid.* not conſidering ('tis likely) that he would much leſs have made a difficultie to concede ſuch bodies alſo to humane ſouls, after they had loſt their terreſtial ones; as his ſectators do not, who hold they then preſently become *Dæmons*.

In the mean time 'tis evident enough the doctrine of the ſeparate ſouls preſent bleſſedneſs is not deſtitute of the patronage and ſuffrage of Philoſophers. And 'tis indeed the known opinion of as many of them as ever held its immortality (which all of all Ages and nations have done, a very few excepted, for in as much as they knew nothing of the reſurrection of the bodie, they could not dream of *a ſtarting interval*,

And 'tis, at leaſt, a ſhrewd preſumption that nothing in reaſon lies againſt it, when no one inſtance can be given among them that profeſſedly, gave up themſelves to its only guidance, of any one that, granting the immortality of the ſoul, and its ſeparableneſs from its terreſtrial body, ever denied the immediate bleſſedneſs of good ſouls in that ſtate of ſeparation. Nor (if we look into the thing it ſelf) is it at all more unapprehenſible that the ſoul ſhould be independent on the body in its operations then in its exiſtence?

Lord

If it be possible enough to form an unexceptionable notion of a spiritual being, distinct, and separable from any corporeal substance (which the learned Doctor *More* hath sufficiently demonstrated in his Treatise of the immortalitie of the Soul) with its proper attributes, and powers peculiar to it self; what can reasonablely with-hold me from assenting, that, being separate from the body, it may as well operate alone (I mean exert such operations as are proper to such a being) as exist alone? That we find it here, *de facto*, in its present state, acting only with dependence on a bodie, will no more infer that it can act no otherwise, then its present existence in a body will, that it can never exist out of it neither whereof amounts to more then the trifling exploded argument *à non esse ad non posse*, and would be as good sense as to say such a one walks in his clothes: therefore out of them he cannot move a foot.

Lord of life; are more *delectable then a mournful disconsolate absence from him* (which the Apostle therefore tells us he desired, *as far better* (and with an Emphasis which our *Eng-*

Yea and the very *use* it self, which the soul now makes of corporeal organs, and instruments, plainlie evinces that it doth exert *some action*, wherein they assist it not. For it supposes an operation *upon them*, antecedent to any operation *by them*. Nothing can be the *instrument* which is not first the *subject* of my action; as when I use a pen, I act *upon*, in order to my acting *by* it, i.e. I impress a motion upon it in order whereunto I use not that, or any other such instrument; And, though I cannot produce the designed effect, leave such characters so and so figured without it, my hand can yet, without it, perform its own action, proper to it self, and produce many nobler effects. When therefore the soul makes use of a bodily organ; its action *upon* it, must needs, at last, be without the ministry of any organ, unless you multiply to it bodie upon bodie *in infinitum*.

And if possibly it perform not some meaner, and grosser pieces of drudgerie; when out of the body, wherein it made use of its help, and service before; that is no more a disparagement, or diminution; then its to the Migistrate, that *law and decency* permit him not to apprehend, or execute a Malefactor with his own hand. *It* may yet perform those operations, which are proper to it self; that is, such as are more noble, and excellent, and immediately conducive to its own felicitie.

Which sort of actions, as *Cogitation*, for instance, and *Dilection*,

*lish*

lish too faintly expresses; for he uses a double comparative [ πολλῷ μᾶλλον κρεῖσσον ] *by much more better*, and as a perfected, i. e. *a crowned triumphant Spirit*, that hath attained the end of its *race* (as the words import in the agonistical notion*) is now in a more vivid, joyous state then, when, late-

though, being done in the body, there is conjunct with them in agitation of the Spirits in the brain and heart; It yet seems to me more reasonable, that, as to those acts, the Spirits are rather subjects then instruments at all of them, that the whole essence of these Acts is antecedent to the motion of the Spirits; and that motion *certainly* (but *accidentally*) consequent, only by reason of the *present*, but *fatable* union the soul hath with the body. And that the purity and refinedness of those Spirits doth only *remove what would hinder* such acts, rather than contribute *positively* thereto. And so little is the alliance between *a thought*, and any bodily thing, even those very finest Spirits themselves; that I dare say whoever sets himself closely and strictly to consider, and debate the matter with his own faculties, will find it much more easily apprehensible, how the acts of intellection, and volition may be performed *without* those very corporeal Spirits then *by them*. However suppose them never so indispensably necessarie to those more noble operations of the soul, it may easilie be furnisht with them, and in greater plentie, and puritie from the ambient aire (or æther) than from a dull torpid body; with some part of which air, if we suppose it to contract a vital union; I know no rational principle that is wronged by the supposition (though neither do I know any that can necessarily infer it.)

Al therefore the doctrine of the souls activitie out of this earthly body, hath favour and friendship enough from Philosophers; so I doubt not but upon the most strict and rigid disquisition, it would be as much befriended (or rather righted) by Philosophie it self; And that their *reason* would afford it as direct, and more considerable defence then their *Authority*.

In the mean time, it deserves to be considered with some resentment, that this Doctrine should find the generality of Learned Pagans more forward Advocates, then some learned, and worthy Patrons of the Christian Faith; which is only imputable to the undue measure and excess of an otherwise just, zeal, in these latter, *for the resurrection of the body*, so far transporting them, that they became willing to let goone Truth, that they might hold another the faster;

and

and to ranſome *this*, at the too deare (and unneceſſary) expence of the *former*. Accounting they could never make ſure enough the reſurrection of the bodie; without making the ſouls dependence on it ſo abſolute, and neceſſarie, that it ſhould be able to do nothing but ſleep in the mean while. Whereas it ſeems a great deal more unconceiveable, how ſuch a being as the ſoul is, once quit of the entanglements and encumbrances *of the body, ſhould ſleep at all, then* how it ſhould *act without the body.** See Dr. *Hammonds* annot. in loc.

ly toyling in a *tireſome way*, it languiſhed under many imperfections. And it is obſervable, that in the three former Scriptures, that phraſe *of being with Chriſt*, or *being preſent with him*, is the ſame which is uſed by the Apoſtle, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 17. to expreſs the ſtate of bleſſedneſs after the reſurrection, intimating plainly the *ſameneſs* of the bleſſedneſs before, and after. And though this phraſe be alſo uſed to ſignifie the preſent injoyment ſaints have of Gods gracious preſence in this life (which is alſo in *nature, and kind* the ſame) yet it is plainly uſed in theſe Scriptures (the two latter more eſpecially) to ſet out to us *ſuch a degree* of that bleſſedneſs, that in compariſon thereof our *preſent being with Chriſt*, is *a not being with him*; our *preſence* with him, now, *an abſence from him. While we are at home in the body, we are abſent from the Lord*; and *I am in a ſtrait betwixt two, deſiring to depart* (or having a deſire unto deſolution) *and to be with Chriſt*, &c. How ſtrangely miſtaken, and diſappointed had the bleſſed Apoſtle been, had his abſence from the body, his diſſolution, his releaſe, ſet him further off from Chriſt, or made him leſs capable of converſe with

with him, then before he was! And how abſurd would it be, to ſay the *ſpirits of the juſt are perfected*, by being caſt into a ſtupifying ſleep; yea, or being put into any ſtate, not better then they were in before? But their ſtate is evidently far better. The body of death is now laid aſide, and the wights of ſin, that did ſo eaſily beſet, are ſhaken off: fleſh and ſin are laid down together; the ſoul is rid of its burdenſome bands, and ſhackles; hath quitted its filthy darkſome priſon (the uſual place of laſineſs, and ſloth, is come forth of it's drowſie dormitory, and the glory of God is riſen upon it. 'Tis now come into the *world of realities*; where things appear *as they are*, no longer as in a dream, or viſion of the night. The vital quickning beams of divine light, are darting in upon it, on every ſide, and turning it into their own likeneſs. The ſhadows of the evening are vaniſhed, and fled away. It converſes with no other objects but what are full themſelves, and moſt apt to repleniſh it with energy and life. This cannot be but a joyful awakning: a bleſſed ſeaſon of ſatisfaction and delight, indeed, to the enlightned, revived ſoul. But

2. It muſt be acknowledged the further, and more eminent ſeaſon of this bleſſedneſs will be, *the general reſurrection day*, which is more expreſly ſignified in Scripture, by this term of [awaying] as is manifeſt in many plain Texts, where 'tis either *expreſly* thus uſed, or implyed to have this meaning in the oppoſite ſenſe of the word ſleep.

Dan 12 2
Joh. 14 12.
2 Cor. 15.
1 Theſ. 4. &c.

*What* addition shall then be made to the Saints blessedness, lyes more remote from our apprehension; in as much as Scripture states not the degree of that blessedness which shall intervene. We know, by a too sad instructive experience, the calamities of our present state, and can therefore more easily conceive, wherein it is capable of betterment, by the deposition of a sluggish, cumbersome body, where those calamities mostly have their spring: but then we know less where to fix our foot, or whence to take our rise, in estimating the additional felicities of that *future state*, when both the states to be compared are so unknown to us.

But *that* there will be great additions is plain enough. The full recompence of obedience, and devotedness to Christ, of foregoing all for him, is affixed by his promise, *to the resurrection of the just*; The *judgment day* gives every one his portion *according to his works*. Then must the holy, obedient Christian hear from its Redeemers mouth, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom*, &c. Till then, the Devils think their *torment to be before their time*. 'Tis *when he shall appear, we shall be like him, and see him as he is*. That noted day is the day of *being presented faultless with exceeding joy*.

And divers things there are, obviously enough to be reflected on, which cannot but be understood to contribute much to the increase and improvement of this inchoate blessedness.

The

*The acquisition of a glorified body.* For our vile bodies shall be so far *transfigured*, as to *be made like*[ conform to] *the glorious body of the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.* And this shall be when he shall appear *from heaven*, where Saints here below, are required to have their commerce as the infranchised Citizens thereof, and from whence they are to continue looking for him, in the mean time. When he terminates and puts a period to that expectation of his Saints on earth, then shall that great change be made, *i. e.* when he actually appears, at which time the *trumpet sounds*, and even *sleeping dust it self awakes*; the hallowed dust of them that slept in Jesus first, who are then to come with him. This change may well be conceived to add, considerably, to their felicity. A natural congruity, and appetite is now answered, and satisfied, which did either lie dormant, or was under somewhat an anxious, restless expectation before; neither of which could well consist with a state of blessedness every way, already perfect. And that there is a real *desire, and expectation* of this change, seems to be plainly intimated in those words of *Job, All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come*: Where he must rather be understood to speak of the resurrection, than of death (as his words are commonly mistaken, and misapplyed) as will appear by setting down the Context from the seventh verse. *For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease.*

μεταχηματίζει σύμμορφον. Phil 3. 20, 21.

1 Thes. 4. 14, 15. 16.

Chap 14. 14.

*cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof dye in the ground: yet through the sent of water, it will bud and bring forth boughs like a plant. But man dyeth and wasteth away; yea man giveth up the Ghost, and where is he? As the waters fail from the Sea, and the flood decayeth, and dryeth up; so man lyeth down, and riseth not till the heavens be no more: they shall not be awaked nor raised out of their sleep. O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that thou wouldest keep me secret till thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me! If a man dye, shall he live again? All the dayes of my appointed time, will I wait till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee; thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hands.* He first speaks according to common apprehension, and sensible appearance touching the hopeless state of man in death, as though it were less capable of reparation, then that of some inferiour creatures unto the end of *ver.* 10. And then, *gradually*, discovers his better hope; bewrayes his Faith, as it were *obliquely*, touching this point; lets it breaking out, first, in some obscure glimmerings, *ver.* 11, 12. giving us in his *Protasis*, a similitude not fully expressive of his seeming meaning, for waters, and flouds, that fail may be renewed; and in his *Apodosis* more openly intimating mans sleep, should be only till *the heavens were no more.* Which [till] might be supposed to signifie [ never ] were it not for what follows, *ver.* 13. where he expressly speaks his confidence by way of *petition*, that

that at *a ſet and appointed time, God would remember him*, ſo as to recall him out of the Grave, and at laſt being now minded to ſpeak out more fully, puts the queſtion to himſelf, *if a man dye, ſhall he live again?* and anſwers it; *all the dayes of my appointed time* (i. e. of that appointed time which he mention'd before, when God ſhould revive him out of the duſt) *will I wait till my change come*, i. e. that glorious change, when the corruption of a *loathſome grave*, ſhould be exchang'd for *immortal glory*, which he amplifies, and utters more expreſly, *ver.* 15. *Thou ſhalt call, and I will anſwer, thou ſhalt have a deſire to the work of thy hands.* Thou wilt not always forget to reſtore, and perfect thy own creature.

And ſurely that *waiting* is not the act of his inanimate, ſleeping duſt, but, though it be ſpoken of the *perſon* totally gone into *Hades*, into the inviſible ſtate; 'tis to be underſtood of that part, that ſhould be capable of ſuch an action, *q. d.* I, in that part, that ſhall be ſtill alive, ſhall patiently await thy appointed time of reviving me in that part alſo, which Death, and the Grave ſhall inſult over (in a temporary triumph) in the mean time: And ſo will the words carry a facile, commodious ſenſe, without the unneceſſary help of an imagined Rhetorical Scheme of Speech. And then, that this *waiting* carries in it *a deſirous expectation* of ſome additional good, is evident at firſt ſight, which therefore muſt needs add to the ſatisfaction and bleſſedneſs, of the expecting ſoul. And wherein it may do ſo, is not altogether

unapprehenſible. Admit that a Spirit, had it never been imbodied, might be as well without a body, or that it might be as well provided of a body out of other materials; 'tis no unreaſonable ſuppoſition, that *a connate aptitude to a body, ſhould render humane ſouls more happy in a body ſufficiently attempered to their moſt noble operations.* And how much doth relation and propriety endear things, otherwiſe mean and inconſiderable? or why ſhould it be thought ſtrange, that a ſoul *connaturallized to matter ſhould* be more particularly inclined to a particular portion thereof? So as that it ſhould appropriate ſuch a part, and ſay *'tis mine.* And will it not be a pleaſure to have a vitality diffuſed through what even more remotely appertains to me, to have every thing belonging to the *Suppoſition* perfectly vindicated from the Tyrannous dominion of death? The returning of the Spirits into a benumb'd or ſleeping toe or finger, adds a contentment to a man which he wanted before. Nor is it hence neceſſary the Soul ſhould covet a re-union with every effluvious particle of its former body. A deſire implanted by God in a reaſonable ſoul will aim at what is *convenient*, not what ſhall be *cumberſome, or monſtrous.*

And how pleaſant will it be to contemplate and admire the wiſdom and power of the great Creatour in this ſo glorious a change, when I ſhall find a Clod of Earth, an Heap of Duſt refined into a Celeſtial purity and brightneſs; when what was *ſown in corruption ſhall be raiſed in incorruption*; what *was ſown in*

*diſhonour, is raiſed in glory*; what *was ſown in weakneſs, is raiſed in power*; *what was ſown a natural body, is raiſed a Spiritual body.* When this *corruptible ſhall have put on incorruption*, and *this mortal an immortality*; and *death be wholly ſwallowed up in victory.* So that this *awaking* may well be underſtood to carry that in it, which may beſpeak it the proper ſeaſon of the Saints *conſummate ſatisfaction and bleſſedneſs.* But *beſides* what it carries in it ſelf: there are other (more extrinſical) concurrents that do further ſignalize this ſeaſon, and import a great increaſe of bleſſedneſs, *then* to Gods holy ones. 1 Cor. 15.

The body of Chriſt is now compleated, *the fulneſs of him, that filleth all in all*, and all the ſo nearly related parts cannot but partake in perfection, and reflected glory of the whole. There is joy in Heaven at the converſion of one ſinner; though he have a troubleſome Scene yet to paſs over; afterwards, in a tempting, wicked, unquiet world, how much more *when the many ſons ſhall be all brought to glory together?*

The deſignes are all now accompliſhed, and wound up into the moſt glorious reſult and iſſue; whereof the Divine Providence had been, as in travel, for ſo many thouſand years. 'Tis now ſeen how exquiſite wiſdom govern'd the world, and how ſteady a tendency the moſt intricate, and perplexed Methods of Providence had, to one ſtated and moſt worthy end.

Specially the conſtitution, adminiſtration,

and ends of the Mediatours Kingdom, are now beheld, in the exact aptitudes, order, and conspicuous glory; when so blessed an issue and success shall commend, and crown the whole undertaking.

The *Divine Authority* is now universally acknowledged, and adored; his *Justice* is vindicated, and satisfied; his *Grace* demonstrated and magnified to the uttermost. The whole assembly of Saints solemnly acquitted by publique sentence, presented spotless, and without blemish to God, and adjudged to eternal blessedness. 'Tis the day of solemn triumph, and jubilation, upon the finishing of all Gods works, from the creation of the world, *wherein* the Lord Jesus *appears to be glorified in his Saints, and admired in all that believe:* Upon which ensues the resignation of *the Mediatours Kingdome* (all the ends being now attained) *that the Father himself may be immediately all in all.* How aptly then are the fuller manifestations of God, the more glorious display of all his Attributes, the larger and more abundant Effusions of himself, reserv'd, (as the best Wine to the last) unto this joyful day? Created perfections couldnot have been before so absolute, but they might admit of improvement; Their capacities not so large, but they might be extended further; and then who can doubt but that divine communications

2 Thes 1.

1 Cor. 15.

may

may also have a proportionable increase, and that upon the concourse of so many great occasions they shall have so?

## CHAP. XI.

*An Introduction to the use of the Doctrine hitherto proposed. The Use divided into Inferences of Truth. Rules of Duty. 1. Inference, That Blessedness consists not in any sensual injoyment. 2. Inference, The Spirit of man (since 'tis capable of so high a Blessedness) a Being of high excellency.*

AND now is our greatest work yet behind; the improvement of so momentous a truth to the affecting and transforming of hearts. That (if the Lord shall so far vouchsafe his assistance and blessing) they may taste the sweetness, feel the power, and bear the impresse and image of it. This is the work both of greatest necessity, difficulty, and excellency, and unto which all that hath been done hitherto is but subservient, and introductive. Give me leave therefore, Reader, to stop thee here, and demand of thee ere thou go further, hast thou any design in turning over these leaves of bettering thy Spirit? of getting a more refined, heavenly *Use.*

ly temper of ſoul, art thou weary of thy droſs, and earth, and longing for the firſt fruits the beginnings of glory? doſt thou wiſh for a ſoul meet for the bleſſedneſs hitherto deſcribed? What is here written, is deſigned for thy help, and furtherance. But if thou art looking on theſe pages, with a wanton, rolling eye, hunting for novelties, or what may gratifie a prurient wit, a coy and ſqueamiſh fancy; Go, read a Romance, or ſome piece of Drollery; know here's nothing for thy turn; and dread to meddle with matters of everlaſting concernment without a ſerious Spirit; read not another line till thou have ſighed out this requeſt, Lord keep me from trifling with the things of Eternity. Charge thy ſoul to conſider, that what thou art now reading muſt be added to thy account againſt the great day. 'Tis amazing to think with what vanity of mind the moſt weighty things of Religion are entertained amongſt Chriſtians. Things that ſhould ſwallow up our ſouls, drink up our Spirits, are heard as a tale that is told, diſregarded by moſt, ſcorned by too many. What can be ſpoken ſo important, or of ſo tremendous conſequence, or of ſo confeſſed truth, or with ſo awful ſolemnity, and premiſed mention of the ſacred name of the Lord, as not to find either a very ſlight entertainment or contemptuous rejection? and this by perſons avowing themſelves Chriſtians! We ſeem to have little or no advantage in urging men upon their own principles, and with things they moſt readily and profeſſedly aſſent to. Their hearts

*Diſſoluti eſt hominis in rebus ſeriis quærere voluptatem.* Arnob.

are

are as much untouch't, and void of impression by the Christian Doctrine, as if they were of another Religion. How unlike is the Christian world to the Christian Doctrine! The seal is fair and excellent, but the impression is languid or not visible. Where is that serious godliness, that heavenliness, that purity, that spirituality, that righteousness, that peace unto which the Christian Religion is most aptly designed to work and form the Spirits of men? we think to be saved by an empty name, and glory in the shew and appearance of that, the life and power whereof we hate and deride. 'Tis a reproach with us not to be *called a Christian*, and a greater reproach *to be one*. If such and such Doctrines *obtain not*, in our professed Belief, we are Hereticks or Infidels: if they *do*, in our practice, we are precisians, and fools. To be so serious, and circumspect, and strict, and holy, to make the practice of godliness so much our business, as the known and avowed principles of our Religion do plainly exact from us (yea though we come, as we cannot but do, unspeakably short of that required measure) is to make ones self a common derision and scorn. Not to be professedly religious is *barbarous*, to be so in good earnest *ridiculous*. In other things men are wont to act and practise according to the known Rules of their several Callings, and Professions; and he would be reckon'd the common fool of the neighbour-hood, that should not do so. The Husbandman that should sow when others reap, or contrive his Harvest into the depth of Winter,

Winter, or sow Fitches, and expect to reap Wheat? The Merchant that should venture abroad his most precious Commodities in a leaky bottom, without Pilot, or Compass; or to places not likely to afford him any valuable return. In Religion only it must be counted absurd to be, and do according to its known agreed Principles, and he a fool that shall but *practise* as all about him profesſe to *believe*. Lord! whence is this apprehended inconsistency between the profession and practise of Religion! what hath thus stupify'd, and unman'd the world! that seriousness in Religion should be thought the character of a fool! that men must visibly make a mockery of the most Fundamental Articles of Faith, onely to save their reputation, and be afraid to be serious least they should be thought mad! Were the Doctrine here opened, believed in earnest, were the due proper impresse of it upon our Spirits, or (as the Pagan Moralists expression is) were our mind *transfigured into it; what manner of persons should we be, in all holy conversation and godliness!*

*ientiam qui dicit, & facienda & vitanda percepit, eadem sapiens dicit, nisi in ea quae dicit transformatus est animus.* Sen. Ep.

But 'tis thought enough to have it in our Creed though never in our hearts, and such as will not *deride* the holiness it should produce, yet *indeavour* it not; nor go about to apply and urge truths upon their own souls to any such purpose. What should turn into Grace, and Spirit, and Life, turns all into Notion and Talk; and men think all is well, if their head be fill'd, and their tongues tipt, with what should transform their souls and govern their

their lives. How are the moſt awful Truths and that ſhould have greateſt power upon mens Spirits, trifled with as matters only of ſpeculation, and diſcourſe! They are heard but as empty airy words, and preſently evaporate, paſs away into words again; like food (as *Seneca* ſpeaks) "that comes up preſently, the ſame "that it was taken in; which (as he ſaith) "profits not, nor makes any acceſſion to the "body at all. A like caſe (as another ingeniouſly ſpeaks) "as if ſheep when they have "been feeding ſhould preſent their Shepherds "with the very graſs it ſelf which they have "cropt, and ſhew how much they had eaten. "No ſaith he, they concoct it, and ſo yield "them Wool and Milk. And ſo (ſaith he) do "not you (*viz.* when you have been inſtru-"cted) preſently go and utter words among "the more ignorant (meaning they ſhould not do ſo in a way of oſtentation to ſhew how much they knew more than others) "but works that "follow, upon the concoction of what hath been by words made known to them. (Let Chriſtians be aſhamed that they need this inſtruction from heathen Teachers.)

Χυμοὶ προδιῆλθον, ἵνα σώματι γένωνται, ὡς σώματι προσγενόμενον εὐθὺς ἐκπίπτει. Sen Epiſt.

Ἐπὰν ἐν τὰ πρόβατα, ἃ ἔχοντα φέγγος τοῖς ποιμέσιν ἐπιδεικνύει πόσον ἔφαγεν, ἀλλὰ τὸν νομὸν ἔσω πνίγαλα, ἔξω ἐξωφέρει ἐν γάλα, ἐν σοτύνιν, μὴ ταχέως ῥήματα τοῖς ἰδιώταις ἐπιδείκνυε: ἀλλὰ ἀπ' αὐτῶν τῶν ἔργων. Epictet.

*Thy words were found and I did eat them* (ſaith the Prophet) *and thy word was to me the joy, and rejoycing of my heart.* Divine truth is only ſo far at preſent *grateful*, or *uſeful for future*, as 'tis received by *faith* and *conſideration*, and in the love thereof into the very heart, and there turned (in *ſuccum & ſanguinem*) into real nutriment to the ſoul: So ſhall man *live by the word of God.* Hence is the application of it

it (both *perſonal* and *miniſterial*) of ſo great neceſsity.

If the Truths of the Goſpel were of the ſame alloy, with ſome parts of Philoſophy, whoſe end is attained as ſoon as they are known. If the Scripture Doctrine (the whole entire Syſtem of it) were not a Doctrine after godlineſs, if it were not deſigned to ſanctifie and make men holy, or if the hearts of men did not reluctate, were eaſily receptive of its impreſsions, our work were as ſoon done, as ſuch a Doctrine were nakedly propoſed. But the ſtate of the caſe in theſe reſpects is known and evident. The tenour and aſpect of Goſpel truth ſpeaks its end; and experience too plainly ſpeaks the oppoſiteneſs of mens Spirits. All (therefore) we read and hear is loſt if it be not urgently apply'd. (The Lord grant it be not then too.)

Therefore, Reader, let thy mind and heart concur in the following improvement of this Doctrine which will be wholly comprehended under theſe

Two heads { Inferences of Truth } that are conſequent and connatural thereto. { Rules of Duty. }

1. Inferences of Truth educible from it.

1. 1. *True Bleſſedneſs conſiſts not in any ſenſual injoyment.* The bleſſedneſs of a man can be but *one*; *Moſt onely one.* He can have but one higheſt and beſt good. And its proper character is that it finally ſatisfies and gives reſt to his Spirit. *This the face and likeneſs of God doth*; his glory beheld and participated.

Here

Here then alone his full blessedness must be understood to lye.

Therefore as this might many other wayes be evinced to be *true*, so it evidently appears to be the proper issue of the *present truth*; and is plainly proved by it. But alas! it needs a great deal more to be *pressed* than *proved*. O that it were but as much *considered*, as it is *known*. The experience of almost 6000. years hath (one would think sufficiently) testified the incompetency of every worldly thing to make men happy, that the present pleasing of our senses, and the gratification of our animal part is not blessedness, that men are still left unsatisfied notwithstanding. But the practice and course of the world is such, as if this were some late, and rare experiment: which (for curiosity) every one must be trying over again. Every age renews the inquiry after an earthly felicity; the design is intail'd (as the Spanish designs are said to be) and reinforc'd with as great a confidence, and vigor from age to age, as if none had been baffled, or defeated in it before; or that it were very likely to take at last. Had this been the alone folly of the *first age*, it had admitted some excuse, but that the world should still be cheated by the same so oft-defeated impostures, presents us with a sad prospect, of the deplorable state of mankind. *This their way is their folly, yet their posterity approve, &c.* The *wearied wits* and *wasted estates*, laid out upon the Philosophers stone, afford but a faint defective representation of this case. What Chymistry can extract *hea-* Psal. 49.

ven

*ven* out of a clod of clay? What art can make bleſſedneſs ſpring and grow out of this cold earth? If all created nature be vext and tortured never ſo long, who can expect this Elixir? Yet after ſo many fruſtrated attempts ſo much time, and ſtrength, and labour loſt, men are ſtill as eagerly and vainly buſie as ever. Are perpetually toſſed by unſatisfied deſires; *labouring in the fire*, wearying themſelves for very vanity, diſtracted by the uncertain (and often contrary) motions of a ravenous appetite, and a blind mind; that would be happy, and knows not how. With what ſounding bowels, with what compaſſionate tears, ſhould the ſtate of mankind be lamented, by all that underſtand the worth of a ſoul? What ſerious heart doth not melt, and bleed for miſerable men, that are (through a juſt *nemeſis**) ſo perpetually mockt with ſhadows, cheated with falſe deluſive appearances, infatuated and betrayed by their own ſenſes. They walk but in a vain ſhew, diſquieting themſelves in vain; their dayes flee away as a ſhadow, their ſtrength is onely labour and ſorrow; while they riſe up early, and lye down late, to ſeek reſt in trouble, and life in death. They run away from bleſſedneſs while they pretend to purſue it, and ſuffer themſelves to be led down without regret to perdition; *as an ox to the ſlaughter, and a fool to the correction of the ſtocks, till a dart ſtrike through their liver.* Deſcend patiently the chambers of death, not ſo much as once thinking, *whether are we going?* dream of nothing but an earthly

* *Ira dei eſt iſta vita mortalis ubi homo vanitati ſimilis factus eſt & dies ejus velut umbra pretereunt, &c.* Aug. de Civ. Dei l. 22. c. 24.

*earthly paradise*, till they find themselves amidst *the infernal regions.*

2. *The Spirit of man (in as much as 'tis capable of such a blessedness) appears an excellent creature.* Its natural capacity is supposed; for the Psalmist speaks of his own numerical person the same that then writ; *I shall behold; shall be satisfied* take away this supposition: and it could not be so said; or, as in *Job*'s words; *I shall behold him, and not another for me*; It would certainly be another not the same. Judge hence the excellency of an humane soul (the principal subject of this blessedness) without addition of any new natural powers, 'tis capable of the vision of God; of partaking, unto satisfaction, the divine likeness. And is not that an excellent creature, that is capable, not onely of surveying the creation of God, passing through the several ranks, and orders of created Beings; but of ascending to the *Being of beings*, of contemplating the divine excellencies, of beholding the bright and glorious face of the blessed God himself; till it have lookt it self into His very likeness, and have his intire image inwrought into it.

The dignity, then, of the Spirit of man is not to be estimated by the circumstances of its present state; as 'tis, here, clad with a sordid flesh, inwrapt in darkness, and gravelling in the dust of the earth; but consider the improveableness of its natural powers, and faculties,

2. *Inference.* Not that this blessedness can be attained by meer humane indeavours (more whereof see under the next Inference) but there's an inclination, a certain *pondus naturæ* (as some Schoolmen speak) by which it propends towards it; or there is the *radix*, or *fundamentum*, or *capacitas* (as some others) *i. e.* that it not only may *receive* it; but that it may be elevated by grace, *allively*, to concure, by its natural powers, as vital principles, towards the attainment of it, according to that known saying of Saint *Aug. Fecit vedens natura ut homo, &c.*

culties; the high perfections it may attain, and the foundations of how glorious a state are laid in its very nature. And then who can tell whether its *possible advancement* is more to be *admired*, or its *present calamity deplor'd*. Might this consideration be permitted to settle, and fix it self in the hearts of men; could any thing be so grievious to them, as their so vast distance from such an attainable blessedness: or any thing so industriously avoided so earnestly abhorred, as that viler dejection and abasement of themselves, when they are so low already by Divine disposition, to descend lower by their own wickedness; When they are already fallen as low as Earth, to precipitate themselves as low as Hell. How generous a disdain should *that thought* raise in mens spirits, of that vile servitude to which they have subjected themselves, a servitude to brutal lusts, to sensual inclinations, and delires; as if the highest happiness they did project to themselves were the satisfaction of these! Would they not with an heroick scorn, *turn away their eyes from beholding vanity*, did they consider their own *capacity* of beholding the divine glory? could they satisfie themselves to become *like the beasts that perish*, did they think of being satisfied with the *likeness of God*. And who can conceive unto what degree this aggravates the *sin* of man, that he *so little minds* (as it will their *misery*, *that shall fall short of*) this blessedness! *They had spirits capable of it.* Consider thou sensual man whose happiness lies in *Colours*, and *Taste*, and

* *Voluptas bestiæ proprie est — Hanc tu (nam dico inter vitos sed) inter homines numeras? cujus summum bonum sapribus, ac coloribus, ac sonis constat? excedit ex hoc animal unum numero pulchrum, ac diis secunde; multis aggregatur animal privato natum.* Sen. Ep. 92.

and *Spunds* (as the Moralist ingeniously speaks) that herd'st thy self with brute creatures, and aimest no higher then they; as little lookest up, and art as much a stranger to the thoughts and desires of Heaven; thy Creation did not set thee so low, *they* are where they were; but *thou* art fall'n from thy excellency. God did not make thee a brute Creature, but thou thy self. Thou hast yet a spirit about thee, that might understand its own originals, and alliance to the Father of Spirits; that hath a designation in its nature to higher converses, and imployments. Many myriads of such spirits, of no higher (original) excellency then thy own, are now in the presence of the Highest Majesty; are *prying* into the eternal glory, contemplating the perfections of the Divine Nature, beholding the unvailed face of God, which transfuses upon them its own satisfying likeness. Thou art not so low-born, but thou might'st attain this state also. That Soveraign Lord, and Authour of all things, calls thee to it; his *goodness invites* thee, his *authority enjoyns* thee, to turn thy thoughts, and designs this way. Fear not to be thought immodest or presumptuous; *'tis but a dutiful ambition; an obedient aspiring. Thou art under a *Law* to be thus happy; nor doth it bind thee to any *natural impossibility*; it designs *instruction* to thee, not *delusion*; *guidance*, not *mockery*. When thou art required to apply, and turn thy Soul to this blessedness; 'tis not the same thing, as if thou wert bidden to remove a Mountain,

* *Hic Deus aequat, illè tendit, originis sui memor. Nemo, inquit, à tanto cursu ascendere unde discessit—&c. Cui eis summa & mundana, &c.* Sen. Ep. 92.

to pluck down a Star, or create a World. Thou art here, put upon nothing but what is agreeable to the primæval nature of man; and though it be to a vaſt heighth, thou muſt aſcend; 'tis by ſo eaſie, and familiar Methods, by ſo apt Gradations, that thou wilt be ſenſible of no violence done to thy nature, in all thy way. Do but make ſome trials with thy ſelf; thou wilt ſoon find, *nothing is thy hindrance, but an unwilling heart.* Try however (which will ſuffice to let thee diſcern thy own capacity, and will be a likely means to make thee willing) how far thou canſt underſtand, and trace the way (complying with it, at leaſt as reaſonable) that leads to this bleſſedneſs. Retire a little into thy ſelf; forget a while thy relation to this ſenſible world. Summon in thy ſelf reflecting and conſidering powers. Thou wilt preſently perceive thou art not already happy, thou art in ſome part unſatisfied; and thence will eaſily underſtand, in as much as thou art not happy in thy ſelf, that it muſt be ſomething, as yet, without thee, muſt make thee ſo; and nothing can make thee happy, but what is, in that reſpect, better then thy ſelf; or hath ſome perfection in it, which thou findeſt wanting to thy ſelf. A little further diſcourſe or reaſoning with thy ſelf, will eaſily perſwade thee, thou haſt ſomething better about thee, then that luggage of fleſh thou goeſt with to and fro; for thou well knoweſt, *that* * is not capable of reaſon, and diſcourſe; and that

Λόγισαι δὲ καὶ σὺ, εἰ ἔτι ταῦτα σώματι δίδοιτο αὐτὰ· καὶ γὰρ τὸ ἐργον αὐτῶν· ὁ δὲ ἐργάσων τελεῖται τῷ σώματος· ἐμπόδιον γὰρ τοῦτο, ἅτις οὐκ ἐν ταῖς διαφοραῖς πρωχθοῦτο. *Plotin. Ennead. 4. lib. 3.*

the

the power of doing ſo is an higher perfection then any thou canſt entitle *it* to; and that therefore beſides thy bulkie material part, thou muſt have ſuch a thing as a *ſpirit*, or *ſoul* belonging to thee; to which, *that*, and thy *other perfections* (not competible to groſs matter) may agree. Thou wilt readily aſſent; that thou canſt never be happy, while thy better, and more noble part is unſatisfied; and that it can only be ſatisfied with ſomething ſutable and connatural to it. That therefore thy happineſs muſt lie in ſomething more excellent then this material, or ſenſible world, otherwiſe it cannot be grateful and ſutable to thy ſoul, yea in ſomething that may be better, and more excellent then thy ſoul it ſelf, otherwiſe how can it *better*, and *perfect* that *. As thou canſt not but acknowledge thy ſoul to be ſpiritual, and immaterial, ſo, if thou attend, thou wilt ſoon ſee cauſe to acknowledge a ſpiritual, or immaterial being, better and more perfect then thy own ſoul. For *its* perfections were not *ſelf-original*, they were therefore *derived* from ſomething, for that reaſon, confeſſedly, more excellent, whence at laſt alſo thou wilt find it unavoidably impoſ'd upon thee, to apprehend, and adore *a being abſolutely perfect*; and then which, there cannot be a more perfect: the firſt ſubject, and common fountain of all perfections; which hath them, *underived* in himſelf, and can *derive* them unto inferiour created beings *. Upon this

* *Sicut non eſt à carne, ſed ſuper carnem, quod carnem facit vivere: ſic non eſt ab homine, ſed ſuper hominem quod hominem facit beati vivere.* D. Aug. de Civit. Dei lib 19 c. 25.

* *Ut in ordine causarum efficientium, ita & in gradu virtutis & perfectionis, non datur progreſſus in infinitum: ſed oportet ſit aliquis primus & ſummus perfectio.* P. Molin. de cognitione Dei. Not to inſiſt upon what hath been much urged by learned men of former, and latter (yea & of the preſent) time [that whoſoever denies the exiſtence of *an abſolute perfect being*, contradicts himſelf in the denial, inſmuch as *neceſſity of exiſtence* is included in the very ſubject of the negation.] ſome accounting it a Sophiſme, and it being unſeaſonable here to diſcuſs it.)

eternal

eternal, and *ſelf-eſſential being*, *the infinitely bleſſed God*; thou neceſſarily dependeſt and oweſt, therefore, conſtant ſubjection, and obedience to him. Thou haſt indeed offended him; and art thereby cut off from all intereſt in him, and intercourſe with him; but he hath proclaimed in his Goſpel, his willingneſs to be reconciled, and that, through the ſufferings, righteouſneſs, and interceſſion of his only begotten Son, thy merciful Redeemer, the way is open for thy reſtitution, and recovery: that thou may'ſt partake from him what ever perfection is wanting to thy bleſſedneſs. Nothing is required from thee in order hereunto, but that relying on, and ſubmitting to thy Redeemers gracious conduct, thou turn thy mind and heart towards thy God, *to know him*, and *conform* to him; to view, and imitate the Divine perfections; the faithful indeavour, and inchoation whereof, will have this iſſue, and reward; the clear viſion, and full participation of them. So that thy *way*, *and work* differ not, in nature, and kind, from thy *end*, *and reward*; thy *duty* from thy *bleſſedneſs*. Nor are either repugnant to the natural conſtitution of thy own ſoul. What violence is there done to reaſonable nature in all this? or what can hinder thee herein, but a moſt culpable averſe, and wicked heart. Did thy *reaſon* ever turn off thy ſoul from God? was it not thy *corruption* only? What vile images doſt thou receive from earthly objects, which deform thy ſoul, while thou induſtriouſly averteſt thy Makers

likeneſs

likeness, that would perfect it? How full is thy mind, and heart of vanity? how empty of God? were this through natural incapacity, thou wert an innocent creature; it were thy *infelicity* (negative I mean) not thy *crime*; and must be resolved into the *Soveraign will of thy Creator*, not *thy own disobedient will*. But when this shall appear, the true state of thy case, and thou shalt hear it from the mouth of thy Judge. "Thou didst not like to retain me in thy knowledge or love; thou hadst reason & will, to use about meaner objects, but none for me; thou couldest sometimes have spared me a glance, a cast of thine eye at least, when thou didst rather chuse it should be in the ends of the Earth. A thought of me had cost thee as little, might as soon have been thought, as of this or that vanity; but thy heart was not with me. I banish thee, therefore, that presence which thou never loved'st. I deny thee the vision thou didst always shun, and the impressions of my likeness which thou didst ever hate. I eternally abandon thee to the darkness, and deformities which were ever grateful to thee. Thine is *a self created hell*; the fruit of thy own choice; no invitations or perswasions on mine could keep thee from it. How wilt thou *excuse thy fault*, or *avert thy doom*! what Arguments or Apologies, shall *defend thy cause*, against these pleadings. Nay what Armour shall *defend thy Soul*, against its own wounding self-reflections hereupon? When every thought shall be a Dart; and a convicted Conscience, an ever gnawing

Worm; a fiery Serpent; with endless involutions, ever winding about thy heart?

It will now be sadly thought on, how often thou saw'st thy way, and declin'dst it, know'st thy duty, and did'st wave it; understood'st thy interest, and did'st slight it; approv'st the things that were more excellent, and did'st reject them. How often thou did'st prevaricate with thy light, and run counter to thy own eyes; while things, confessedly, most worthy of thy thoughts, and pursuits, were overlook't; and empty shadows eagerly pursu'd. Thy own heart will now feelingly tell thee, it was not want of *capacity*, but *inclination* that cut thee off from blessedness. Thou wilt now bethink thy self, that *when life, and immortality were brought to light before thy eyes, in the Gospel*; and thou wast told of this future blessedness of the Saints, and *prest to follow holiness, as without which thou couldst not see God*; it was a *reasonable man* was spoken to, that had a power to *understand, and judge*, and *chuse*: not *a stone or a brute*. Thy *capacities* of this blessedness makes thee capable also of the most exquisite torment, and reflected on, actually infers it. How passionately (but vainly) wilt thou then cry out, "O that I had fil'd up the place "of any the meanest Creature throughout "the whole Creation of God, that I had "been a Gnat, or a Fly, or had never been "rather, then to have so noble, abused *pow*-"*ers* eternally to reckon for! Yea and thou must reckon for not onely the actual light, and good impressions thou had'st, but

but even all thou waſt capable of, and mightſt have attained. Thou ſhalt now recount with anguiſh, and horror (and rend thy own Soul with the thoughts) what thou mighteſt now have been; how excellent and glorious a creature! hadſt thou not contriv'd thy own miſery and conſpir'd with the Devil, againſt thy ſelf, how to deform, and deſtroy thy own Soul. While this remembrance ſhall alwayes a freſh return, that nothing was injoyned thee as a duty; or propounded, as thy bleſſedneſs; but what thou waſt made capable of, and that it was not *fatal neceſſity*, but *a wilful choice* made thee miſerable.

## CHAP. XII.

Inference. 3. *That a change of heart is neceſſary to this bleſſedneſs. The pretences of ungodly men whereby they would avoid the neceſsity of this change. Five conſiderations propoſed in order to the detecting the vanity of ſuch pretences. A particular diſcuſsion and refutation of thoſe pretences.*

3. 'TIs *a mighty change muſt paſſe upon the Souls of men in order to their enjoyment of this Bleſſedneſs.* This equally follows from the conſideration of the Nature and ſubſtantial parts of it, as of the *qualifying righteouſneſs* prerequired to it. A lit- 3. Inference.

tle

tle reflection upon the common state and temper of mens spirits, will soon inforce an acknowledgement that the Vision of God, and conformity to him are things above their reach, and which they are never likely to take satisfaction in, or at all to savour; till they become otherwise disposed then, before the renovating change, they are. The text *expresses* no more in stating the qualified subject of this *blessedness* [in righteousness] then it evidently *implies* in the account it gives of this *blessedness* it self, that it lies [in seeing God and being satisfied with his likeness.] Assoon as it is considered that the blessedness of Souls is stated here, what can be a more obvious reflection then this, Lord! then how great a change must they undergo! what! such Souls be blessed in seeing and pertaking the Divine likeness that never loved it? were so much his enemies? 'Tis true they are *naturally capable* of it, which speaks their original excellencie, but they are *morally uncapable*. i. e. *indisposed* and *averse* which as truly, and most sadly speaks their present vileness; and the sordid abject temper they now are of. They are destitute of no *natural Powers* necessary to the attainment of this blessedness; but in the mean time have them so depraved, by impure, and vitious tinctures; that they cannot relish it or the means to it. They have reasonable Soul's, furnished with intellective, and elective faculties; but labouring under a manifold distemper and disaffection; that they *cannot receive*, they *cannot savour*, the things of God, or what is Spiritual. They want the sub-

*Capax est noster animus pessimarum rerum, si vitiis non deprimatur.* Sen. Epist 92.

1 Cor 2.14. Rom 8.5.

*via*

ἕξιν (as we may express it,) the well disposednes for the Kingdom of God intimated *Luke* 9. 62. the ἱκανότης, the meetnes, the aptitude, or idoneity for the inheritance of the Saints in light. *Col.* 1. 12.

A settled aversion from God hath fastned its roots in the very spirit of their minds (for that is stated as the prime subject of the change to be made) and how can they take pleasure, then, in the vision and participation of his glory? whereas, by beholding the glory of the Lord, they should be changed into the same image: a vail is upon the heart till it turn to the Lord, as was said concerning the Jews. 2 *Cor.* 3. The God of this world hath blinded their minds least (that transforming light) the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. *Chap.* 4. 4. They are alienated from the Life of God through their ignorance, and blindnes of heart. The life they chuse is to be ἄθεοι ἐν κόσμῳ, Atheists, or *without God in the world*. They like not to retain God in their knowledge, are willingly ignorant of him. Say to him depart from us we desire not the knowledge of thy wayes. The Lord looks down from Heaven upon the children of men to see if any will understand, if any will seek after God, and the result of the inquiry is, there is none that doth good no not one. They are haters of God, as our Saviour accused the Jews, and Saint *Paul* the Gentiles. *Are lovers of pleasure more then lovers of God.* Their understandings are dark, their minds vain, their wills obstinate, their Consciences

Eph. 4 23.

Eph. 4 18.

Chap. 2. 12. Rom 1. 28. 2 Pet. 3. Job 21. 14. Psal 53.

Joh. 15. Rom. 1.

sciences seared, their hearts hard and dead, their lives one continued Rebellion against God and a defiance to Heaven. At how vast distance are such Souls from such blessedness! The notion and nature of blessedness must sure be changed, or the temper of their Spirits. Either they must have new hearts created, or a new Heaven, if ever they be happy. And such is the stupid dotage of vain man, he can more easily perswade himself to believe, that the Sun it self should be transformed into a dunghill, that the Holy God should lay aside his Nature, and turn Heaven into a place of impure darkness; then that *he himself* should need to undergo a change. O ye powerful infatuation of *self love*, that men in the *gall of bitterness* should think 'tis well with their spirits, and fancie themselves in a case good enough, to enjoy Divine pleasures; that (as the Toads venome offends not it self) their loathsom wickedness, which all good men detest, is a pleasure to them, and while 'tis as the poison of Asps under their lips, they call it as a daintie bit, revolve it in their thoughts with delight. Their wickedness speakes it self out to the very hearts of *others*, while it never affects their *own*; and is found out to be hateful while they still continue flattering themselves. And because they are without spot *in their own eyes*; they adventure so high, as to presume themselves so, in the pure eyes of God too; and instead of designing to be *like God*, they already imagine him *such a one as themselves*. Hence their allotment of time (in the whole of it, the

Psal. 36. 1, 2.

Psal. 50.

the Lord knowes, little enough) for the working out of their salvation, spends a pace; while they do not so much as understand their business. Their *measured hour is* almost out; an *immense Eternity* is coming on upon them; and lo they stand as men that cannot find their hands. Urge them to the speedy serious indeavour of an *heart-change*; earnestly to intend the business of regeneration, of becoming new creatures; they seem to understand it as little, as if they were spoken to in an unknown tongue; and are in the like posture with the confounded builders of *Babel*, they know not what we mean, or would put them upon. They wonder what we would have them "do. *They are* (say they) *Orthodox* Christians. "They believe all the Articles of the Chri-"stian Creed. They detest all Heresie, and "false Doctrine; They are no strangers to the "house of God, but diligently attend the in-"joyned Solemnities of Publick Worship: "Some possibly can say they are sober, just, "Charitable, Peaceable; and others that can "boast lesse of their Vertues yet, say they, are sorry for their sins, and pray God to forgive them: And if we urge them concerning their Translation from the state of Nature, to that of Grace; their becoming new creatures, their implantation into Christ. They say they have "been Baptized, and therein regenerate, and "what would we have more?

But to how little purpose is it to equivocate with God? to go about to put a fallacy upon the Judge of Spirits? or escape the animadvertion

verſion of his fiery flaming eye, or elude his determinations, and pervert the true intent and meaning of his moſt eſtabliſhed Conſtitutions and Laws.

Dareſt thou venture thy ſoul upon it? that this is all God means, by *having a new heart created, a right Spirit renewed in us*, by being made Gods *workmanſhip, created in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works*: by *becoming new creatures, old things being done away, all things made new*: by *ſo learning the truth as it is in Jeſus, to the putting off the old man--- and putting on the new; which after God is created in righteouſneſs and true holineſs*; by *being begotten of Gods own will by the word of truth*, to be (the *aruguſt*) the chief excellency, the prime glory (as certainly his new creature is his beſt creature) the firſt fruits, *or the devoted part*, of all his creatures; by *having Chriſt formed in us*; by partaking *the divine nature*, the *incorruptible ſeed*; the *ſeed of God*, by being *born of God, Spirit of Spirit*, as of earthly parents we are *born fleſh of fleſh*. When my eternal bleſſedneſs lies upon it, had I not need to be ſure, that I hit the true meaning of theſe Scriptures? eſpecially that, at leaſt, I fall not below it, and reſt not in any thing ſhort of what Scripture makes indiſpenſably neceſſary to my entring into the Kingdom of God?

Pſal. 51.
Eph. 2. 10.
2 Cor. 5. 17.
Eph. 4. 23. 24.
Jam 1. 18.
Gal. 4. 19.
2 Pet. 1. 4.
1 Pet. 1.
John 3. 6.

I profeſſedly wave controverſies, and 'tis pity ſo practical a buſineſs, as this I am now upon, and upon which Salvation ſo much depends, ſhould ever have been incumbred with any controverſie. And therefore (though I ſhall not

not degress so far as to undertake a *particular* and *distinct* handling, here, of this work of God upon the soul, yet) I shall propound something in general, touching the *change* necessarily previous to this blessedness, (wherein that necessity is evidenceable from the nature of this blessedness, which is the business I have in hand) that, I hope, will pass among Christians for acknowledged truth, not liable to dispute, though the Lord knows it be little considered. My design being rather to awaken souls to the consideration of *known* and agreed things, than to perplex them about *unknown*. Consider therefore.

*First*; *that the holy Scriptures, in the forementioned and other like passages, do plainly hold forth the necessity of a* real change, *to be made in the inward temper, and dispositions of the soul*; *and not a* relative only, *respecting its state.* This cannot be doubted by any, that acknowledge *a real, inherent depravation*, propagated in the nature of man. No, nor denyed by them that grant such a corruption to be general, and continued among men; whether by imitation only, or what way soever. And willing I am, to meet men upon their own principles, and concessions, however erroneous, or short of the truth they may be, while they are yet improvable to their own advantage. Admit that *regeneration*, or the *new birth* includes a *change of our relation and state God-ward*; doth it therefore *exclude* an intrinsique subjective change of the inclinations and tendencies of the Soul? And if it did yet other termes, are more pecu- 1.

larly,

liarly, appropriate to, and most expresly point out, *this very change alone*; As that of *conversion*, or of *turning to God*; *of being renewed in the spirit of the mind*; of *putting off the old man that is corrupt by* &c. *and putting on the new man which is created in righteousness, and true holiness* &c. *of partaking the Divine nature*; It matters not if this or that expression be understood, by some, more principally in another sense, the *thing it self*, of which we speak, is as clearly expressed, and as urgently pressed (as there was cause) as any other matter whatsoever throughout the whole Book of God. But men are slower of belief, as to the great Article of the Christian Doctrine, then to most (I might say, *any*) other. This Truth more directly assaults the strong holds of the Devil, in the hearts of men; and is of more immediate tendency to subvert his Kingdom; Therefore they are most unwilling to have it *true*, and most hardly believe it. Here they are so madly bold, as to give the lie to all Divine Revelations; and though they are never so plainly told *without holiness none shall see God*, they will yet maintain the contrary belief, and hope; till, *go ye cursed*, vindicate the Truth of God, and the flames of Hell be their Eternal confutation. Lord! that so plain a thing will not enter into the hearts of men; that so urgent inculcations will not yet make them apprehend, that their Souls must be renewed, or perish! That they will still go dreaming on, with that mad conceit that (whatever the Word of God says to the contrary) they may yet with unsanctified hearts get to Heaven!

Heaven! How deplorable is the case, that when men have no other hope left them, but that the God of truth will prove false, & belie his word; yea, and overturn the nature of things, to save them in their sins! Thou that livest under the Gospel, hast thou any pretence for thy (seeming) ignorance in this matter? couldst thou ever look one quarter of an hour into the Bible, and not meet with some intimation of this truth? What was the ground of thy mistake? What hath beguiled thee into so mischievous a delusion: How could such an imagination have place in thy soul; that *a Child of wrath by nature*, could become a Child of God without *receiving a new nature*? That so vast a change could be made in thy state, without any at all in the temper of thy Spirit?

*Secondly*, consider, *That this change is, in its own nature, and the design of God, who works it, dispositive of the soul for blessedness.* 'Tis sufficiently evident, from the consideration of the state it self, of the unrenewed soul, that a change is necessary for this end; such a soul in which it is not wrought when once its drowsie, stupifying slumber is shaken off, & its reflecting power awakened, must needs be a perpetuall torment to it self. So far it is remov'd from blessedness, it is its own Hell, and can flie from misery & death no faster then from it self. Blessedness composes the soul, reduces it to a consistancie, it infers (or rather is) a self-satisfaction; a well-pleasedness and contentment with one self, in rich's, and fill'd with the divinefulness. Hence 'tis *at rest*; not as being pent in, but contentedly dwelling with it self; and keeping within its own bounds of its own accord. The unre- 2. *Acquiescence.*

newed soul can no more contain it self within its own termes, or limits; is as little self consistent, as a raging flame, or an impetuous tempest. Indeed its own lusts perpetually (as so many vultures) rend and tear it; and the more, when they want external objects. Then (as hunger) their fury is all turned inward; and they prey upon intestines; upon their own subject; but unto *endless torment*, not *satisfaction*. In what posture is this soul for rest and blessedness.

The *nature of this change*, sufficiently speakes its own design. 'Tis an introduction of (the *primordia*) the very principles of blessedness.

And Scripture as plainly speaks the design of God. He *regenerates to the undefiled inheritance*. *Makes meet for it*; *works*, formes, or fashions the soul *unto that self same thing*, viz. *to desire & groan after that blessed state*; and consequently to acquiesce and rest therein. Therefore, vain man, that dreamest of being happy without undergoing such a change; how art thou trying thy skill to abstract a thing from it self. For the prerequired righteousness whereunto thou must be changed, and this blessedness are *in kind*, *and nature* the same thing; as much as *a Child*, *and a man*. Thou pretendest thou would'st have that perfected, which thou canst not indure, should ever be begun: Thou setteest thy self to prevent and suppresse what, in its own nature, and by Divine Ordination tends to the accomplishment of thy own pretended desires. Thou wouldst have the Tree, without ever admitting the *Seed*, *or Plant*.

1 Pet. 1. 4
Col 1. 12.
2 Cor. 5 5.

Thou

thou wouldst have *heat*, and canst not indure the least *warmth*; so besotted a thing is a carnal heart!

Thirdly, *That, in as much as this blessednes consists in the satisfactory sight, and participation of Gods own likeness, unto whom the soul is habitually averse, This change must chiefly stand in its becoming* holy *or* godly, *or in the alteration of its dispositions and inclinations, as to God.* Otherwise the design, and end of it is not attained. We are required to *follow peace with all men* (but here the accent is put) *and holiness, without which no man shall see God*, Heb. 12. 14. 'Tis therefore a vain thing, in reference to what we have now under consideration, *viz. the possibility of attaining this blessednes*; to speak of any other changes that fall short of, or are of another kind from, the right disposition of heart Godward. *This change*, we are now considering, is no other then the proper adequate impress of the Gospel-discovery, upon mens spirits, (as we have largely shewn the righteousnes is, in which it terminates.) The sum of that discovery is [*That God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself*] The proper impress of it, therefore, is the *actual reconciliation* of the soul to God, through Christ; a friendly well affected posture of Spirit *towards God our last end, and highest good; and towards Christ, our only way* (since the Apostacy) of attaining and injoying it. To rest therefore in any other good dispositions, or indowments of mind, is as much besides the business, as impertinent to the present purpose, as if

3. Heb. 12 14. 2 Cor. 5 18 19.

one design'd to the *Government of a City*, should satisfie himself that he hath the skill *to play well on a Lute*; or he that intends *Physick*, that he is well seen in *Architecture*. The general Scope and Tenor of the Gospel tells thee, O man, plainly enough, what the business is thou must intend (if thou wilfully overlook it not) in order to thy blessedness. 'Tis written to draw thee into *fellowship with the Father and the Son, that thy joy may be full.* It aimes at the bringing of thee into a state of blessedness *in God through Christ*; and is therefore the instrument by which God would forme thy heart thereto. *The seal* by which to make the first impression of *his image* upon thee. Which will then as steadily incline, and determine thy soul towards him; as the magnetique touch ascertains the posture of the Needle; wherefore doth he, *there* discover his own heart; but to melt and win, and transform thine. The *word of grace* is the *seed* of the new Creature. *Through the exceeding great and precious promises, he makes souls partake of the divine nature. Grace is, firstly, revealed, to teach the denial of ungodliness, &c.* Turn thy thoughts hither then, and consider, what is there done upon thy soul, by the Gospel, to attemper and conform it to God? wherein hath thy heart answered this its visible design, and intendment? Thou art but in a delirious dream till thou seriously bethinkest thy self of this. For, otherwise, how can the aversion of thy heart from him escape thy daily observation; thou canst not be without evidences of it; what

1 Joh. 1. 1, 2, 3, 4.

pleasure

pleasure dost thou take in retiring thy self with God? what care to redeem time *onely* for converse with him? had'st thou not rather be any where else? In a time of vacancy from business, and company; when thou hast so great a variety of things before thee, among which to chuse an object for thy thoughts, do they not naturally fall upon any thing rather then God! Nor do thou think to shift off this, by assigning the *meer natural causes*; for if there were not somewhat more in the matter, why is it not so with all? He, upon whom this change had passed, could say; *My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips, when I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night watches. My meditation of him shall be sweet; I will be glad in the Lord. How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God, how great is the sum of them? If I should count them, they are more in number then the sand; when I wake, I am still with thee. Yea, in the way of thy judgments, O God, have we waited for thee, the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my Soul have I desired thee in the night, yea with my spirit within me will I seek thee early, &c.* Therefore, plain it is, there is *a sinful distemper* to be wrought out, an *ungodly disposition of heart*; which it concerns thee not to rest, till thou see removed. Psal. 36. 5, 6. Psal. 104 34. Psal. 139 17, 18. Isa. 26. 8, 9.

Fourthly, Consider, *that to become godly; or this change of inclinations, and disposition towards God, is that which of all other, the soul doth most strongly reluctate and strive against; and* 4.

*which therefore it undergoes with greateſt difficulty and regret.* 'Tis an horrid and amazing thing it ſhould be ſo, but Scripture, and experience leave it undoubted that ſo it is. What! that the higheſt Excellency, the moſt perfect Beauty, Lovelineſs, and Love it ſelf ſhould ſo little attract a reaſonable Spiritual being that iſſued thence? His own off-ſpring ſo unkind! what more then monſtrous unnaturalneſs is this, ſo to diſaffect ones own Original! 'Twere eaſie to accumulate, and heap up conſiderations that would render this aſtoniſhingly ſtrange. So things are reckon'd upon ſeveral accounts, either as they are more rare, and unfrequent (which is the vulgar way of eſtimating wonders) or as their cauſes, are of more difficult inveſtigation; or (if they are moral wonders) as they are more unreaſonable, or cauſeleſs; upon this laſt account, *Chriſt marvelled at the Jews unbelief*; And ſo is this hatred juſtly marvellous; as *being altogether without a cauſe.*

Mark 6. 6.
Joh 15. 25.

But thence to infer there is no ſuch thing, were to diſpute againſt the Sun. No truth hath more of *light and evidence in it*, though none more of *terrour and prodigie*. To how many thouſand objects is the mind of man indifferent? can turn it ſelf to this or that? run with facility all points of the Compaſs, among the whole univerſe of beings; but aſſay, only, to draw it to God, and it recoiles: Thoughts, and affections revolt, and decline all converſe with that bleſſed object! Toward other objects it freely opens, and dilates it ſelf, as under the benign

benign beams of a warm Sun: there are placid, complacential emotions; amicable sprightly converses and imbraces. Towards God only, it is presently contracted, and shut up. Life retires, and it becomes as a stone; cold, frigid, and impenetrable. The quite contrary to what is required (which also those very precepts do plainly imply) 'tis alive to sin, to the world, to vanity, but crucified, mortified, dead to God, and Jesus Christ. Rom. 6. 11.

The natures of many men that are harsh, fierce, and savage, admit of various cultivations, and refinings; and by moral precept, the exercise, and improvement of reason, with a severe animadversion, and observance of themselves, they become mild, tractable, gentle, meek. (The story of the *Physiognamists* guess at the temper of *Socrates* is known) but of all other, the disaffected soul is least inclinable ever to become *good natur'd* towards God, wherein grace, or holiness doth consist. Here 'tis most unperswadable, never facile to this change. One would have thought no affection should have been so natural, so deeply inwrought into the spirit of man, as an affection towards the Father of Spirits; but *here*, he most of all discovers himself to be without *natural affection*, surely here is a sad proof, that such affection doth not ascend.

The whole duty of man as *to the principle of it*, resolves into *love*. *That is the fulfilling of the Law*. As *to its object*; the two Tables devide it between God, and our neighbour. And accordingly divide that love. Upon those two

Branches whereof; *love to God*, and *love to our neighbour*, hang all the Law and the Prophets.

The wickedness of the world hath kil'd this love at the very root; and indisposed the nature of man to all exercises of it, either way, whether towards God, or his neighbour. It hath not only rendred man unmeet for *holy communion* with God; but in a great measure for *civil society with one another*. It hath destroyed good nature; made men false, envious, barbarous; turn'd the world (especially the dark places of the Earth, where the light of the Gospel shines not) into habitations of cruelty. But who sees not the enmity, and disaffection of mens hearts towards God is the more deeply rooted, and less superable evil?

The beloved Apostle gives us a plain and sad intimation how the case is, as to this; when he reasons thus. *He that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen; how can he love God, whom he hath not seen?*

He argues from the less to the greater; and this is the ground upon which his argument is built: *That the loving of God is a matter of greater difficulty, and from which the Spirit of man is more remote, then the loving of his neighbour.* And he withall insinuates an account why it is so; Gods remoteness from our sense, which is indeed *a cause*, but no *excuse*. For is our so gross sensuality no sin? that nothing should affect our hearts but what we can see with our eyes? as if *our sense* were the onely measure

meaſure or judg of excellencies. We are not all fleſh, what have we done with our ſouls? if we cannot ſee God with our eyes, why do we not with our minds? at leaſt ſo much of him we might, as to diſcern his excellency above all things elſe: How come our ſouls to loſe their dominion, and to be ſo ſlaviſhly ſubject to a ruling ſenſe? But the reaſon leſs concerns our preſent purpoſe; that whereof it is the reaſon; that implyed aſſertion, *that men are in a leſs diſpoſition to the love of God then their neighbour*, is the ſad truth we are now conſidering. There are certain homilitical vertues, that much adorn and poliſh the nature of man; Urbanity, Fidelity, Juſtice, Patience of Injuries, Compaſſion towards the Miſerable, &c. and, indeed, without theſe, the world would break up, and all civil ſocieties disband; if, at leaſt, they did not in ſome degree obtain. But in the mean time men are at the greateſt diſtance imaginable from any diſpoſition to ſociety with God. They have *ſome love for* one another; but *none for* him. And yet it muſt be remembred that love to our neighbour, and all the conſequent exertions of it, becoming dutie by the Divine Law; ought to be performed as acts of obedience to God; and therefore ought to grow from the ſtock and root of a Divine Love; I mean *love to God*. They are otherwiſe but Spurious Vertues, Baſtard Fruits (*men gather not Grapes of Thorns, &c.*) they grow from a Tree of another *kind*, and what ever ſemblance they may have of the true, they want their conſtituent form, their life

[1] Joh. 3.14. life and soul. Though *love to the brethren*, is made a character of the regenerate state, of *having past from death to life*; 'Tis yet but a more *remote*, and is it self brought to trial by this *higher*, and more immediate *one*, and which is more intimately connatural to the new creature, even the *Love of God*; *By this we know we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his Commandments. A respect to God* * specifies every Vertue, and Duty. What ever is loved, and served, and not in him, and for him (*servato ordine finis*, as the School-phrase is) becomes an Idol, and that love and service is Idolatry. And what a discovery is here of disaffection to God; that in the exercise of such the above mentioned vertues, one single act, shall be torn from it self, from its specifying moral form, onely to leave out *him*. A promise shall be kept, but without any respect to God—(for even the promises made to him are broken without any scruple.) That which is *anothers*, shall be rendred to him; but God shall not be regarded in the business. An alms given, *for the Lords sake*, left out. That which concerns my neighbour often *done*, but what concerns God therein, as it were *studiously* omitted. This is what he that runs may read; that though the hearts of men are not to one another as they should; they are much more *averse* towards God.

Chap. 5 2.

* *Proinde virtutes quas sibi videtur habere, nisi ad Deum referat, etiam ipsâ vitia sunt potiùs quàm virtutes.* Aug. de Civit. Dei l. 19. c 25.

Men are easier of acquaintance towards one another, they slide insensibly into each others bosomes; even the most churlish, morose natures are wrought upon by assiduous repeated

peated kindnesses (*gutta cavat lapidem, &c.*) as often falling drops at length wear and work into very stones. Towards God their hearts are more impenetrable then Rocks, harder then Adamants. He is seeking with some, an acquaintance all their days: They live their whole age, under the Gospel, and yet are never wonne. They hearken to one another, but are utterly unperswadable towards God; as the *deaf Adder that hears not the voice of the Charmer, though charming never so wisely.* The cleerest Reason, the most powerful Arguments, move them not, no nor the most insinuative allurements, the sweetest breathings of love. *How often would I have gathered thee, as the Hen her Chickens under her wings, and ye would not. God draws with the cords of a man, with the bands of love; but they still perversly keep at an unkind distance.* Matth. 23 37. See Psal. 81. 8. to 13. Pro. 1. 20. to 24. &c. Hos. 11. 4.

Men use to believe one another (were there no credit given to each others words, and some mutual confidence in one another, there could be no humane converse, all must affect solitude, and dwell in Dens, and Desarts as wild beasts) but how incredulous are they of all Divine Revelations? though testified with never so convincing evidence. *Who hath believed our report!* The word of the eternal God is regarded (O amazing wickedness) as we would the word of a Child or a Fool. No sober rational man, but his Narrations, Promises, or Threatnings are more reckon'd of.

Men are more reconcileable to one another, when enemies; more constant, when friends.

friends. How often doth the *power* of a conquering enemy, and the *diſtreſs* of the conquered, work a ſubmiſſion on this part, and a remiſſion on that. How often are haughty ſpirits ſtoopt, by a ſeries of calamities, and made ductile; proud *arrogants* formed, by neceſſity and miſery, into humble *ſupplicants*, ſo as to lie proſtrate at the feet of a man, that may help, or hurt them; while ſtill the ſame perſons retain indomitable, unyielding ſpirits towards God, under their moſt afflictive preſſures. Though his gracious Nature, and Infinite fulneſs promiſe the moſt certain, and liberal relief, 'tis the remoteſt thing from their thoughts to make any addreſs to him. *They* Job. 35. *cry becauſe of the oppreſſion of the mighty, but none ſays where is God my Maker, who giveth ſongs in the night.* Rather periſh under their burdens, then look towards God, when his own viſible hand is againſt them, or upon them, and their lives at his mercy; they ſtand it out to the laſt breath; and are more hardly *humbled* then *conſumed*: Sooner burn, then weep, ſhrivel'd up into aſhes, ſooner then melted into tears. Rev. 16. *Scorched with great heat, yet repent not to give glory to God*: Gnaw their tongues for pain, and yet ſtill more diſpoſed to blaſpheme, then pray or ſue for mercy. Dreadful thought! As to one another, Reconciliations among men are not impoſſible, or unfrequent; even of mortal enemies, but they are utterly implacable towards God! yet they often wrong one another, but they cannot pretend God ever did them the leaſt wrong, yea they have liv'd

liv'd by his bounty all their days. *They ſay to God, depart from us, yet he filleth their houſes with good things.* So true is the Hiſtorians * obſervation. *Hatred is ſharpeſt where moſt unjuſt.*

Yea, when there *ſeems at leaſt* to have been a reconciliation wrought, are treacheries, Covenant-breakings, revolts, ſtrangeneſs, ſo frequent among men towards one another, as from them towards God? How inconſiſtent with friendſhip is it, according to common eſtimate, to be alwayes promiſing, never performing: upon any, or no occaſion to break off intercourſes, by unkind alienations, or mutual hoſtilities; to be moroſe, reſerv'd each towards other. To decline, or diſaffect each others converſe. To ſhut out one another from their hearts, and thoughts. But how common, and unregretted are theſe carriages towards the bleſſed God? It were eaſie to expatiate on this Argument, and multiply Inſtances of this greater diſaffection. But in a word, what obſerving perſon may not ſee, what ſerious perſon would not grieve to ſee, the barbarous ſooner putting on civility; the riotous, ſobriety; the treacherous, fidelity; the moroſe, urbanity; the injurious, equity; the churliſh, and covetous; benignity, and charity; then the ungodly man piety, and ſincere devotedneſs unto God. Here is the principal wound and diſtemper ſin hath infected the nature of man with: Though he have ſuffered a univerſal impairment, he is chiefly prejudic'd in regard of his habitude, and tendency

* *Tacitus* ſpeaking of the hatred of *Tiberius*, and *Auguſta*, againſt *Germanicus*, the cauſes whereof, ſaith he, were *acriores, quia iniquæ.*

dency towards God; and what concerns the duties of the first Table. Here the breach is greatest, and here is greatest need of repair. True it is an inoffensive winning deportment towards men, is not without its excellency, and necessity too. And it doth indeed, unsufferably reproach Christianity, and unbecome a Disciple of Christ; yea it discovers a man not to be led by his Spirit, & so to be none of his, to indulge himself in immoral deportments towards men; to be undutiful towards Superiors; unconversable towards equals; oppressive towards Inferiors; unjust towards any. Yet is an holy disposition of heart towards God, most earnestly, and in the first place to be indeavoured (which will then draw on the rest) as having in it highest equity and excellency; and being of most immediate necessity to our blessedness.

5. Fifthly, consider, *That there may be some gradual tendencies, or fainter essayes towards godliness, that fall short of* real godliness, *or come not up to that thorough change, and determination of heart Godward, that is necessary to the blessedness.* There may be a returning, but not *to the most high*, and wherein men may be (as the Prophet immediately subjoyns) like *a deceitful* Bow, *not fully bent*, that will not reach the mark; They come not *home* to God. Many may be *almost perswaded*; and even within reach of Heaven, *not far from the Kingdom of God*; may seek to enter, and not be able; their hearts being *somewhat inclinable*, but *more averse*; for they can only be unable as they are

Hos. 7. 16.

un-

unwilling. The ſoul is in no poſſibility of taking up a complacential reſt in God, till it be brought to this, to move toward him *Spontaneouſly*, and with (as it were) *a ſelf motion*. And then is *it ſelf moved* towards God, when its preponderating bent is towards him. As a maſſie ſtone that one attempts to diſplace, if it be heav'd at till it preponderate, it then moves out, by its own weight, otherwiſe it reverts, and lies *where*, and *as* it did before. So 'tis with many mens hearts, all our lifting at them is but the rolling of the returning ſtone, they are mov'd, but not remov'd: ſometimes they are lifted at, in the publiqne Miniſtry of the Word, ſometimes by a private ſeaſonable admonition, ſometimes God makes an affliction his Miniſter: a danger ſtartles them, a ſickneſs ſhakes them, and they think to change their courſe; but how ſoon do they change thoſe thoughts, and are where they were? what inlightnings and corrections; what awakenings, and terrours; what remorſes, what purpoſes, what taſts, and reliſhes do ſome find in their own hearts, that yet are blaſted and come to nothing? How many miſerable abortions after travailing pangs and throwes, and fair hopes of an happy birth of the new Creature? Often ſomewhat is produced that much reſembles it, but is not it. No *gracious principle*, but may have its counterfeit in an *ungracious heart*; whence they deceive not others only, but themſelves, and think verily they are true converts, while they are yet in their ſins. How many wretched ſouls that lie du-

biouſly

biously strugling a long time, under the contrary alternate impressions of the *Gospel* on the one hand, and the present evil *world* on the other; and give the day to their own sensual inclinations at last. In some degree, *escape the corruptions of the world, by the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, but are again intangled, and overcome, so as their latter end it worse then their beginning.* 2 Pet. 2. Such a man is so far from being advantaged by his former faint inclinations towards God, that he will be found, at last, under this aggravated wickedness beyond all other men: that when others wandred from God through inadvertency, and inconsideration; this man will be found to have been his enemy upon deliberation, and again the various strivings of his convinced heart to the contrary. This is more eminently victorious and raigning enmity, such a one takes great pains to perish. Alas! 'tis not a slight touch, an overly superficial tincture, some evaned sentiments of piety, a few good thoughts or wishes, that bespeak *a new man, a new creature.* 'Tis *a thorough prevailing change*, that quite alters the habitual posture of a mans soul; and determines it towards God; so as that the after course of this life may be capable of that denomination, *a living to God; a living after the Spirit.* That exalts the love of God into that Supremacy in him, that it becomes the *governing principle* of his life; and the reason and measure of his actions; that as he loves him above all things else, better then his own life; so he can truly

(though

(though possibly sometimes with a doubtful trembling heart) resolve the ordinary course of his daily walking, and practise into that *love*, as the *directive principle* of it. *I pray, I read, I hear, because I love God.* I desire to be just, sober, charitable, meek, patient, *because I love God.* This is the perfection, and end of the love of God, therefore *that* must needs be the principle *hereof*) *obedience to his will.* Herein appears that *power of godlinesse*, denied (God knowes) by too many that have the form: *The Spirit of love, power,* and *of a sound mind.* That onely is a sound mind, in which such love rules in such power. Is not love to God often pretended by such, that when ever it comes to an actual competition, discover they love their own flesh a great deal more? that seldom ever cross their own wills to do his; or hazard their own fleshly interest, to promote his interest? we may justly say (as the Apostle, in a case fitly enough reducible hither) *how dwells the love of God in that man?* Notwithstanding such a subdued, ineffectual love to God, such a one shall be denominated, and dealt with as an enemy. 'Tis not likely any man on earth, hates God so perfectly, as those in Hell. And is not every quality not yet perfect in its kind, and that is yet growing more, and more intense; in the mean time allayed by some degree of its contrary? Yet that over-mastered degree denominates not its subject, nor ought a man from such a supposed love to God, have the name of a *lover* of him. That principle only is capable

1 Joh. 2 4. Τέλειοτης. 2 Tim. 3. 5 Chap. 1. 7.

of denominating the man, that is prevalent and practical, that hath a governing influence on his heart, and life. He in whom the love of God hath not ſuch power and rule, whatever his fainter inclinations may be, is an *ungodly man*.

And now, methinks theſe ſeveral conſiderations compared, and weighed together, ſhould contribute ſomething to the ſettling of right thoughts in the minds of ſecure ſinners, touching the *nature and neceſſity* of this *heart-change*; and do ſurely leave no place for the forementioned vain pretences that occaſioned them.

For (to give you a ſummary view of what hath been propounded in thoſe foregoing conſiderations) It now plainly appears, *that the holy Scripture requires in him that ſhall injoy this bleſſedneſs; a mighty change of the very temper of his ſoul, as that which muſt diſpoſe him thereto; and which muſt therefore chiefly conſiſt, in the right framing of his heart towards God; towards whom it is moſt fixed averſe, and therefore not eaſily ſuſceptible of ſuch a change.* And that any *ſlighter, or more feeble inclination toward God, will not ſerve the turn; but ſuch onely whereby the ſoul is prevalently, and habitually* turned to him.

And then what can be more abſurd, or unſavory? what more contrary to Chriſtian Doctrine, or common Reaſon? then inſtead of this neceſſary heart-change to inſiſt upon ſo poor a Plea, as that mentioned above, as the onely ground of ſo great a hope. How empty and

and frivolous will it appear in compariſon of this great Soul-transforming change, if we ſeverally conſider the particulars of it."

As for *Orthodoxie indoctrinals*, 'tis in its ſelf an highly laudible thing, and in reſpect of the *Fundamentals* (for therefore are they ſo called) indiſpenſibly neceſſary to the bleſſedneſs. As *that* cannot be without *holineſs*, ſo nor *holineſs* without *truth*. But (Beſides that this is that which every one pretends to) is every thing which is *neceſſary*, *ſufficient*? As to *natural neceſſity* (which is that we now ſpeak to) *reaſon*, an *intellectual nature*, are alſo neceſſary; ſhall therefore all men, yea, and Devils too be ſaved? Joh. 17. 17.

Beſides, are you ſure you believe the grand Articles of the Chriſtian Religion? conſider a little, The { Grounds / Effects } of that petended Faith.

Firſt, its grounds, every *aſſent* is as the grounds of it are. Deal *truly* here with thy ſoul. Can you tell wherefore you are a Chriſtian? what are thy inducements, to be of this Religion? are they not ſuch as are common to thee with them that are of a falſe Religion? (I am here happily prevented by a worthy Author*, to which I recommend thee, but at the preſent, a little bethink thy ſelf) Is it not poſſible thou may'ſt be a Chriſtian for the ſame reaſons, for which one may be a *Jew*, or a *Mahometan*, or a meer *Pagan*? as *viz.* Education, Cuſtome, Law, Example, Outward advantage, &c. Now conſider, if

* Mr. *Pinke's* Trial of ſincere love to Chriſt.

thou find this, upon enquiry to be thy case; the Motives of thy being a Christian, admit of being cast together into this form of reasoning.

That Religion which a Mans Forefathers were of, which is established by Law, or generally obtains in the Country where he lives: The Profession whereof, most conduces to, or best consists with his credit, and other outward advantages, that Religion he is to imbrace as the *true Religion*. But such I find the *Christian Religion* to be to me. Therefore, &c.

The Proposition, here, is manifestly false; for it contains grounds common to all Religions, publiquely owned, and profest throughout the world: and sure all cannot be true: And hence the conclusion (though *materially considered* it be true yet) *formally considered*, as a conclusion issuing from such premises, must needs be false; and what then is become of thy *Orthodoxie*; when as to the *formal object* of thy Faith thou believest, but as *Mahometans* and *Pagans* do? when thou art of *this* Faith, by *Fate*, or *Chance* only, not *Choice*, or rational Inducement?

Next, as to the *effects* of thy Faith: Let them be inquired into also, and they will certainly bear proportion to the grounds of it. The

Rom. 1. 16. *Gospel* is the *power of God to salvation to every*

1 Thes. 2. 13. *one that believes*; to them that believe it not, it signifies nothing. The Word of God received with a Divine Faith, as the Word of God, it works effectually upon all that so receive it, *i. e.* all that believe what such efficacious work-

workings of it haſt thou felt upon thy ſoul? Certainly its moſt *connaturural* effect is *that very change of heart*, and inclinations God-ward, of which we have been ſpeaking. What is ſo ſutable to the Goſpel Revelation, as a good temper of heart Godward? and how abſurd it is to introduce the cauſe, on purpoſe to exclude its genuine inſeparable effect? But evident it is (though true Faith cannot) that *ſuperficial irrational aſſent*, in which alone, many glory; may too well conſiſt with a diſaffected heart towards God; and can it then ſignifie any thing towards thy bleſſedneſs? ſure to be ſo a ſolifidian, is to be a nullifidian. Faith not working by love, is not Faith: at leaſt profits nothing.

*For thy outward conformity in the ſolemnities of worſhip*, 'tis *impotable* to ſo corrupt motives, and principles; that the *thing it ſelf*, abſtractively conſidered, can never be thought characteriſtical, and diſtinguiſhing of the heirs of bleſſedneſs. The worſt of men, may perform the beſt of outward duties.

Thy *moſt glorious, loaſted vertues*, if they grow not from the proper root, *love to God*, they are but ſplendid ſins, as above appears, and hath been truly ſaid of old.

*Thy repentance is either true, or falſe*, if true, it is that very change of mind and heart, I ſpeak of, and is therefore eminently ſignaliz'd by that note 'tis repentance [towards God] If falſe, God will not be mocked. Heb. 6.

*For thy Regeneration in Baptiſm*; what can it avail thee, *as to this bleſſedneſs*, if the preſent

temper of thy heart be unſutable thereto. Didſt thou ever know any that held that *all the baptized ſhould be ſaved*? Will thy Infant-ſanctity excuſe the enmity, and diſaffection to God, of thy riper age?

In ſhort, if we ſeclude this work of God upon the Soul; how inconſiderable is the difference between the Chriſtian and the Heathen world? wherein can it then be underſtood to lie, but in ſome ineffectual Notions, and External Obſervances? And can it be thought that the righteous holy God, will make ſo vaſt a difference in the ſtates of men *hereafter*, who differ ſo little *here*? or that it ſhall ſo highly recommend a man to God, that it was his lot to be born, and to have liv'd upon ſuch a Turf or Soil, or in ſuch a Clime, or part of the World? His gracious Providence is thankfully to be acknowledg'd, and ador'd, that hath aſſigned us our ſtations under the Goſpel; but then it muſt be remembred the Goſpel hath the goodneſs, not of the *end*, but of the *means*; which, as by our improvement, or non-improvement, it becomes effectual, or ineffectual, doth acquit from, or aggravate condemnation; and that it works not as Charm, or Spell, we know not how, or why, or what we think not of it; but by recommending it ſelf in the demonſtration and power of the Holy Ghoſt, to our Reaſon, and Conſciences, to our Wills, and Affections, till we be delivered up into the Mold and Form of it. Surely were it ſo ſlight a matter, as too many fondly dream, that muſt diſtinguiſh between

Rom. 6. 17.

tween them that ſhall be ſaved, and ſhall periſh; there would need no *ſtriving to enter in at the ſtrait gate*; and the Diſciples queſtion would never have been; *who then ſhall be ſaved?* but rather who ſhall not be ſaved? nor would it have been reſolved by our Saviour into the immediate power of him alone, *to whom all things are poſſible*, that any are ſaved at all; nor have been ſo earneſtly aſſerted by him, that *none could come to him, but whom his Father draws.* Math. 19: Joh. 6.

The obvious import of which paſſages is ſuch, that if careleſs ſinners could once obtain of themſelves ſeriouſly to conſider them; methinks they ſhould find little reſt in their ſpirits, till they might diſcern a work wrought there, in ſome degree *worthy of God*, an impreſſion ſome way proportionable to the power of an Almighty Arm; and that might ſpeak God its Author. For notwithſtanding the Souls natural capacities before aſſerted, and inferred its * Moral incapacitie; I mean its wicked averſation from God, is ſuch as none but God himſelf can overcome.

* That moral incapacity is alſo in ſome truly nat[ural], that is ſame ſe[nſe], whet[her] are ſi[n] by nat[ure] the

children of wrath, *Ephes.* 2. 3. Therefore humane nature muſt be conſidered as *created by God*, and as *propagated by man*. In the former ſenſe, as God is the Author of it, 'tis taken in this diſtinction, of *moral and natural impotency*; which needs not further explication; yet you may take this account of it from Dr. *Twiſſe*. *Impotentia ficticia, quæ Deo gratum eſt & acceptum non eſt impotentia naturæ, ſed morum. Nulla etenim nobis deeſt facultas naturalis per peccatum originale; juxta illud* Auguſtini; *Nulli agnoſcendi veritatis abſtulit facultatem. Adſunt remanet potentia, quâ facere poſſumus quæcunq; volumus* Vind. l. 3. error 9. ſect 6. Naturalem potentiam, *quidlibet egendi pro arbitrio ipſorum dictamen ad omnes tranſmitti, moralem potentiam moralem. Vasquez. Criminat.* 3. *S* 1. *Diſp.* 2. *Cap.* 3.

Nor is that aversation the lesse culpable for that it is so hardly overcome, but the more. 'Tis an aversation of *will*; and who sees not that every man is more *wicked*, accaccording as his will is more wickedly bent? Hence his impotencie or inability to turn to God, is not such as *that he cannot turn if he would*; but it consists in this, *that he is not willing*. He affects a distance from God.

Which shews therefore the necessity still of this change. For the *possibility* of it, and the incouragement (according to the Methods wherein God is wont to dispense his Grace) the Sinner hath to hope, and indeavour it; will more fitly fall into consideration else where.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XIII.

Fourth Inference. *That the Soul in which ſuch a change is wrought, reſtleſly purſues it till it be attain'd.*

Fifth Inference. *That the knowing of God, and conformity to him, are ſatisfying things, and do now in a degree ſatisfie according to the meaſure wherein they are attained.*

Sixth Inference. *That the love of God towards his people is great, that hath deſigned for them ſo great, and even a ſatisfying good.*

4. 4. THis further to be inferr'd, that *a ſoul wherein ſuch a change is wrought, purſues this bleſſedneſs with reſtleſs ſupreme deſire, till it attain to the fulneſs thereof.* We have here a plainly-implyed deſcription of the poſture and tendencies of ſuch a ſoul (even of a ſanctified, holy Soul; which had therefore undergone this bleſſed change) towards this ſtate of bleſſedneſs. I ſhall (ſaith he) be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs, *q. d.* I cannot be ſatisfied otherwiſe. We have ſeen how great a change is neceſſary to diſpoſe the Soul to this bleſſedneſs, which being once wrought, nothing elſe can now ſatisfie it. Such a thing is this bleſſedneſs

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(I speak now of so much of it as is previous, and conducing to satisfaction, or of blessedness materially considered, the Divine Glory to be beheld, and participated.) 'Tis of that nature it makes the Soul restless, it lets it not be quiet, after it hath got some apprehension of it, till it attain the full enjoyment. The whole life of such a one, is a continual *seeking Gods face.* So attractive is this glory of a subject rightly disposed to it. While others crave *Corn and Wine*, this is the summe of the holy Souls desires, *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance, &c.* The same thing is the object of its *present desires* that shall be of its *eternal satisfaction and enjoyment.* This is now its *one thing*, the request insisted on, to behold the beauty *of the Lord, &c.* and while in any measure it doth so, yet 'tis still looking for this blessed hope, still hoping to be like him, see him as he is; the expectation of satisfaction in this state implies the restless working of desire till then, for what is this satisfaction, but the fulfilling of our *desires*; the perfecting of the souls *motions*, in a complacential *rest.* Motion, and *rest* do exactly correspond each to other. Nothing can *naturally* rest in any place, to which it was not before *naturally* inclin'd to move; and the rest is proportionably more compos'd, and steady, according as the motion was stronger, and more vigorous. By how much the heavier any body is, so much the stronger and less resistible is its motion downward, and then accordingly, it is less moveable, when it hath attained its resting place.

Psal. 4.

Psal. 27.

'Tis

'Tis therefore a vanity, and contradiction to ſpeak of the Souls being *ſatisfied*, in that which it was not before deſirous of *. And that ſtate which it ſhall ultimately and eternally acquieſſe in (with a reſt that muſt therefore be underſtood to be moſt compoſed and ſedate) towards it muſt it needs move with the ſtrongeſt and moſt unſatisfied deſire, a deſire that is ſupreme, prevalent, and triumphant over all other deſires, and over all obſtructions to it ſelf, leaſt capable of diverſion, or of pitching upon any thing ſhort of the terme aimed at. Ask therefore the holy Soul, *What is thy Supreme deſire?* and ſo far as it underſtands it ſelf, it muſt anſwer; *to ſee, and partake the divine glory; to behold the bleſſed face of God; till his likeneſs be tranſfuſed through all my powers, and his entire image be perfectly formed in me; preſent to my view what elſe you will, I can be ſatisfied in nothing elſe but this.*

Therefore this leaves a black note upon thoſe wretched ſouls, that are wholly ſtrangers to ſuch deſires; that would be better ſatisfied to dwell always in duſt: that ſhun the bleſſed face of God as Hell it ſelf; and to whom the moſt deſpicable vanity is a more deſirable ſight, then that of divine glory. Miſerable ſouls! conſider your ſtate, can that be your bleſſedneſs which you deſire not? or do you think God will receive any into his bleſſed preſence, to whom it ſhall be a burden? methinks, upon the reading of this, you ſhould preſently doom your ſelves, and ſee your ſentence written in your breaſts, compare your hearts

*Aptitudinally (I mean) and Exhypotheſi, *i.e.* ſuppoſing the knowledge of the object: Otherwiſe, as to actual explicite deſires God doth give us beyond what we can aſk or think. But 'tis impoſſible the ſoul ſhould reſt ſatisfied in that which upon knowledge it is undeſirous of, and doth, or would reject.

hearts with his holy mans: See if there be any thing like this, in the temper of your Spirits; and never think well of your selves till you find it so.

Inference. 5. *The knowledge of God, and conformity to him, are, in their own nature, apt to satisfie the desires of the soul, and even now actually do so, in the measure wherein they are attained.* Some things are not of a *satisfying nature*; there is nothing tending to satisfaction in them. And then the continual heaping together of such things, doth no more towards satisfaction, then the accumulating of Mathematical Points would towards the compacting of a solid body; or the multiplication of Ciphers only to the making of a summe. But *what shall one day, satisfie*, hath in it self *a Power, and aptitude thereto.* The *act* (when ever it is) supposes the *power*. Therefore the hungry craving soul, that would fain be *happy*, but knows not how; needs not spend its dayes in making uncertain guesses, and fruitless attempts, and trials. It may fix its hovering thoughts, and upon assurance here given, say I have now found at last where satisfaction may be had; and have onely this to do; to bend all my powers hither, and intend this one thing, the possessing my self of this blessed rest; *earnestly* to indeavour, and *patiently* to wait for it.

Happy discovery! welcome tidings! I now know which way to turn my eye, and direct my pursuit. I shall no longer spend my self in dubious toilsome wandrings, in anxious, vain inquiries. I have found! I have found!

found! bleſſedneſs is here. If I can but get a lively, efficacious ſight of God, I have enough——*Shew me the Father, and it ſuffices.*

Let the weary wandring ſoul bethink it ſelf, and retire to God; he will not mock thee with ſhadows, as the world hath done. This is eternal life to know him the onely true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom he hath ſent. A part from Chriſt thou canſt not know, nor ſee him, with fruit and comfort, but the Goſpel revelation (which is the Revelation of God in Chriſt) gives thee a lovely proſpect of him. His Glory ſhines in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, and when, by beholding it, thou art changed into the ſame likeneſs, and findeſt thy ſelf gradually changing more and more, from glory to glory, thou wilt find thy ſelf accordingly in a gradual tendency towards ſatisfaction, and bleſſedneſs. That is, do but ſeriouſly ſet thy ſelf to ſtudy, and contemplate the *Being*, and *Attributes* of God; and then look upon him, as, through the Mediatour, he is willing to be reconcil'd to thee, and become thy God; and ſo long let thine eye fix, and dwell here, till it affect thy heart; and the proper impreſs of the Goſpel be by the Spirit of the Lord inſtamp't upon it, till thou find thy ſelf wrought to a compliance with his holy will, and his image formed in thee; and thou haſt ſoon experience thou art entring into his reſt; and wilt reliſh a more ſatisfying pleaſure in this bleſſed change; then all thy worldly ſenſual injoyments, did ever afford thee before.

Surely,

Surely, if the perfect vision, and perception of his glorious likeness will yield a compleat satisfaction at last; the initial, and progressive tendencies towards the *former*, will, *proportionably*, infer the *latter*.

'Tis obvious hence, to collect who are in this world (ordinarly and, *cæteris paribus*, where more unusual violent temptations hinder not) the most *satisfied*, and contented persons; even those that have most of the clarifying sights of God, and that thence partake most of his image (indeed Scripture only vouchsafes the name to such sights of God, *he that doth evil hath not seen God*) Such as have most of a godly frame wrought into *their spirits*, and that have hearts most attempered, and conformed to God. These are the most contented persons in the world. Content is part of the gain that attends godliness; it concurring, renders the other a great gain. [—*godliness with contentment*] the form of expression discovers how connatural contentment is to godliness; as if they were not to be mentioned apart. Godliness, as if he had said, is a very gainful thing, but if you would comprehend the gainfulness of it fully, do not abstract too curiously, take in with it, that which is of so near an alliance, that you will hardly know how to consider them apart; let its inseparable adjunct *contentment*, go along with it; and you will find it againful thing indeed.

1 Joh. 3. 6.
3 Joh 11.
1 Tim. 6. 6.

The true *knowledge* of God so directly tends to holiness, and that to *contentation*, that it may

may be too evidently concluded, that a diſcontented perſon, hath little of the one or the other, not much knowledge, and leſs grace; he is ſo far from being like God, that in the Apoſtles language above we may ſay, *he hath not ſeen him.* Doth that perſon know God, or hath ever ſeen him, that falls not into the duſt, admiring ſo glorious a Majeſty? that ſubjects not himſelf to him, with Loyal affections, accounting it his only grand concernment to pleaſe, and ſerve him? But the diſcontented perſon takes upon him, as if he were God alone, and as if he expected every creature to do him homage, and thought the creation were made for the pleaſure and ſervice of none but him. Hath that perſon ever ſeen God, that acknowledges him not a ſufficient portion? a full, all-comprehending good. Hath he ſeen him, that ſees not reaſon to truſt him; to commit all his concernments to him. Hath he ſeen him that loves him not, and delights not in his love? Hath he ſeen him that quits not all for him, and abandons not every private intereſt to eſpouſe his; and how evidently do theſe things tend to quiet and compoſe the ſoul? Diſcontent proceeds from idolizing thoughts of our ſelves; 'tis rooted in ſelf-conceit, in ſelf-dependence, ſelf-love, ſelf-ſeeking, all which deſpicable Idols (or that one great Idol, *Self*, thus variouſly ſerved, and Idolized) one *ſight* of the Divine Glory would confound and bring to nothing. The ſights of God melt the heart, break it under a ſenſe of ſin, and hence compoſe it to

a meek, peaceful humility; but the discontented spirit is an unbroken, proud, imperious spirit. The sights of God purifie the soul, refine it from the dross of this vile world, make it daily aspire to a conformity unto the pure and Spiritual nature of God. But a discontented spirit, is a sensual, terrene spirit (for what, but such objects are the usual matter of most mens discontents?) taking sensuality in its just latitude, 'tis a low, Dunghil spirit; fit for nothing but to rake, and scrabble in the dirt.

I insist upon this apprehending (what deserves more lamentation then it hath observation) that too many annex a profession of eminent godliness, and spirituality into an indulged, querulous, impatient temper of spirit, joyn a splendid appearance of piety to an unreformed perverse frowardness (which agree as well as a Jewel of Gold to a Swines snout) nothing pleases them; their mercies are not worth the acknowledging; their afflictions intolerable, not to be born. They fall out and quarrel with all occurrences, actions, events; neither Man, nor God, doth any thing good in their sight. The world is not well govern'd, nothing falls out well as to themselves. What can possibly be thought on more repugnant to the knowledge of God. The grand design, of all Religion, and the very Spirit of the Gospel? than this temper? which way do these tend and aime but to lead souls to blessedness? to bring them into a peaceful happy satisfied state and frame? and must we, because

because that end cannot be attained *here*, therefore go the quite contrary way? or pretend we are going to heaven with our backs turned upon it? Sure the discoveries God now makes of himself to us, and by which he impresses his likeness upon his own; though they ultimately design our satisfaction and blessedness in heaven; as intermediate there unto, they aime at the bringing us into an Heaven upon Earth, to form us unto a life agreeable, and hath analogie with that of heaven; unto which nothing is more analogous in our prepresent state then that peace, and serenity which result from Divine Knowledge, and holiness: nothing more inconsistent, then a peevish, fretful, turbulent Spirit. The *one* is a participation of a bright, and mild light from heaven; the *other* of a dark, and raging fire from Hell? 'Tis onely Gods face, his glorious likeness reflected on our souls, that shall satisfie hereafter, and make heaven, heaven. He doth not now wholly conceal himself from us, nor altogether hide his face. The shining of the same face (in what degree he now vouchsafes them) will make this Earth an Heaven too. One glance towards him may transmit a lively, pleasant lustre upon our spirits (*They looked to him and were lightned.*) And we live in the expectation of clearer, and more impressive, eternal visions. It will become us to express a present satisfiedness, proportionable to our present sights, and expectations; and to endeavour daily to see more, and to be more like God, that we may be daily more

*Psal.* 34. 5.

and more satisfied. While we cannot yet attain to be making gradual approaches towards that blessed state. By how much any have more of the vision and likeness of God in their present state: so much they approach nearer unto satisfaction.

6. We infer; *The love of God to his people is great, which hath designed for them so great, and even a satisfying good.* We cannot overlook the occasion this Doctrine gives us, to consider, and contemplate a while the love of God. If this shall be the blessedness of his Saints, 'tis a great love that shall be the Spring and source of it.

Two things, here before our eyes, discover the greatness of this love. That it designes satisfaction to the persons meant; and that they shall be satisfied with the *Divine vision and likeness.*

1. *It designs their satisfaction.* This is as far as love can go. 'Tis love to the uttermost: It doth not satisfie itself, till it satisfie them. 'Tis love to spare an enemy, to relieve a stranger; but to satisfie for ever, them that were both; this sure exceeds all the wonted measures of love. Much love is shewn in the forgiveness of sin, in the supply of necessities, but herein (as the Apostle speaks in another case) is the love of God perfected (as to its exercise) it hath now perfectly attained its end; when it hath not left so much as a craving desire, not a wish unsatisfied; the soul cannot say, *I wish it were better; O that I had but this one thing more to compleat my happiness.* It hath neither pretence

pretence, nor inclination to think ſuch a thought. Divine Love is now at reſt; It was travailing (big with gracious deſigns) before it hath now delivered it ſelf. It would rather create new heavens every moment, then not ſatisfie: but it hath now done it to the full, the utmoſt capacity of the ſoul is filled up; it can be no happier then it is. This is loves triumph over all the miſeries, wants, and deſires, of a languiſhing ſoul. The appropriate, peculiar glory of Divine love. If all the excellencies of their whole creation beſides, were contracted into one glorious creature, it would never be capable of this boaſt: I have ſatisfied one ſoul. The love of God leaves none unſatisfied, but the proud deſpiſers of it. Now is the eternal Sabbath of love. Now it enters into reſt, having finiſh't all its works, it views them over now with delight, for lo, they are all Good. its works of Pardon, of Juſtification, and Adoption. Its works of Regeneration, of Converſion, and Sanctification; its eſtabliſhing, quickning, comforting works; they are all good, good in themſelves, and in this their end; the *ſatisfaction and repoſe of bleſſed ſouls.* Now divine love puts on the Crown, aſcends the Throne, and the many Miriads of glorified Spirits fall down about it, and adore. All profeſſe to owe to it the ſatisfying pleaſures they all injoy. Who can conſider the unſpeakable ſatisfaction of thoſe bleſſed Spirits, and not alſo reflect upon this exalted greatneſs of divine love!

2. 'Tis again great love, if we conſider

*wherewith they shall be satisfied.* The sight, and participation of the Divine glory, his face, his likeness, his represented and impressed glory. There may be great love that never undertakes, nor studies to satisfie all the desires of the persons we cast our love upon; especially where nothing will satisfie but high, and great matters. The love of God knows no difficulties; nor can be overset. The greater the performance, or vouchsafement; the more suitable to *Divine Love.* It hath resolved to give the soul a plenary satisfaction, perfectly to content all its desires: and since nothing else can do it, but an eternal beholding of the glorious face of the Divine Majesty, and a transformation into his own likeness; that shall not be with-held. Yea it hath created, refined, inlarged its capacity on purpose, that it might be satisfied with nothing less. Great love may sometimes be signified by a glance; the offered view of a willing face. Thus our Lord Jesus invites his Church to discover her own love, and answer his, *Let me see thy face,* &c. Cant. 2. 14. Love is not more becomingly exprest, or gratified then by mutual looks, [*ubi amor, ibi oculus*] How great is that love that purposely layes aside the vail; that never turns away its own, nor permits the aversion of the beholders eye, throughout eternity. Now we see in a glass; then *face*, to *face*; as if never weary of beholding on either part, but on that part the condiscention lies, is the transcendent, admirable love. *That* a generous, beneficent (the other till it be satisfied here)

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a craving indigent love. And how inexpressible a condiscension is this? poor wretches! many of whom, possibly, were once so low, that a strutting Grandee, would have thought himself affronted by their look; and have met with threatning rebukes their overdaring venturous eye; lo now they are permitted (to stand before Princes? that's a mean thing) to feed their eyes with Divine glory, to view the face of God. He sets them before his face for ever.

And that eternal vision begets in them an *eternal likeness*, they behold and partake glory at once, that their joy may be full. They behold not a glorious God, with deformed souls; that would render them a perpetual abomination, and torment to themselves. Love cannot permit that Heaven should be their affliction; that they should have cause to loath and be weary of themselves in that presence. It satisfies them by cloathing, and filling them with glory; by making them partake of the Divine likeness, as well as behold it. 'Tis reckon'd a great expression of a complying love, but to give a Picture; when the parties loved only permit themselves to view in a mute representation, a vicarious face. This is much more, a vital image (as before) Gods one living likeness propagated in the soul, the inchoation of it (is called the *Divine Nature*, the *seed of God*; what amazing love is this, of the great God to a worm? not to give over till he have assimilated it to his own glory; till it appear as a ray of light begotten of the Father of

1 Joh. 2. ult. Chap. 3. 1. Lights. *Every one ſaith the Apoſtle, that doth righteouſneſs, is born of him* and then it follows; *Behold, what manner of love—to be the ſons of God; to be like him, to ſee him as he is*, &c. How great a word is that (ſpoken in reference to our preſent ſtate) —to make us partakers of [*his*] *holineſs*. And (as well it might) 'tis inſtanc't as an effect, and argument of love (for ſure chaſtening it ſelf abſtracted from that end of it, doth not import love.) *Whom the Lord loveth, he chaſteneth*—and then by and by, in the ſame ſeries and line of diſcourſe is added —*to make us partakers of his holineſs*. Love always either ſuppoſes ſimilitude, or intends it, and is ſufficiently argued by it either way. And ſure the love of God cannot be more directly expreſſed, then in his firſt intending to make a poor ſoul like him, while he loves it with compaſſion; and then imprinting and perfecting that likeneſs, that he may love it with eternal delight: Love is here the *firſt* and the *laſt*, the beginning and end in all this buſineſs.

Heb. 12.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XIV.

The 7th Inference. *That ſince this bleſſedneſs is limited to a qualified ſubject* [*I in righteouſneſs*] *the unrighteous are neceſſarily left excluded. The* 8th Inference. *That righteouſneſs is no vain thing, in as much as it hath ſo happy an iſſue, and ends ſo well.*

7. CONſidering this bleſſedneſs is not common, but limited to a qualified ſubject [I in righteouſneſs] *perſon clad'd in righteouſneſs.* It evidently follows. *The unrighteous are neceſſarily excluded, and ſhut out; can have no part nor portion in this bleſſedneſs.* The ſame thing that the Apoſtle tells us without an inference; *Know ye not that the unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God, &c.* Intimating that to be a moſt confeſſed known thing. Know ye not? is it poſſible ye can be ignorant of this? 1 Cor. 6.

The *natural neceſſity* of what hath been here infer'd, hath been argued already from the conſideration of the *nature of this bleſſedneſs.* The *legal neceſſity* of it, ariſing from the Divine will, and Law, is that I mainly intend at preſent. By ſuch a neceſſity alſo, they are excluded: who by Gods rule (according to which the ſupreme judgment muſt be ma-

naged) shall be found unrighteous. Those that come not up to the tearms of the Gospel Covenant; never accepted the offers, nor submitted to the commands of it. And that hence consequently are unrelated to Christ, and ununited to him; no way capable of advantage by his most perfect and all-sufficient righteousness, that alone fully answers all the exactions, and demands of the Covenant of Works: and so, who are at last found unrighteous by the Old Law, and the New; the Law both of the Creatour, and Redeemer too.

There is the same necessity these should be excluded, as that God should be just and true. The word is gone forth of his mouth in righteousness and cannot return. He did not dally with sinners, when he settled those constitutions, whence this necessity results. *He is not a man, that he should lye, nor the Son of man, that he should repent. An Heathen understood so much of the nature of God.*

I have thought sometimes, with much wonder, of the stupid folly of unsanctified hearts, they are even confounded in their own wishes; and would have (in order to their security) they know not what. Were the question faithfully put to the very heart of such a one, what wouldest thou have done in order to thy eternal safety from divine wrath and vengeance? would not the answer be, O that God would recall those severe constitutions he hath made, and not insist so strictly, on what he hath required in the Gospel, in order to the salvation

on of ſinners. But fooliſh wretch, doſt thou know what thou ſayſt? wouldſt thou have God repeal the Goſpel that thou mayeſt be the more ſecure? in what a caſe art thou then? Haſt thou no hope if the Goſpel ſtand in force? what hope wilt thou have if it do not? Muſt the hopes of all the world be ruin'd to eſtabliſh thine? and yet leave them involv'd in the common ruine too? What, but the Goſpel gives the leaſt hope to Apoſtate ſinners? There is now hope for thee in the Goſpel promiſe, if thou return to God. *Let the wicked forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him turn to the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, and he will abundantly pardon.* Isa. 55. But take away the Goſpel and where art thou? Were it poſſible for thee to repent, and become a new man, what ſettles the connexion between Repentance, and Salvation but the Goſpel-promiſe? Will the violated Law of works accept thy Repentance inſtead of Obedience? Doth it not expreſly preclude any ſuch expectation? Doth it give any ground to look for any thing but death after ſin? Thou muſt therefore flye to the Goſpel or yield thy ſelf loſt; and know it contains none but *faithful* and *true* ſayings, that have more ſtability in them, than the foundations of heaven and earth. Therefore expect nothing to be altered for thy ſake. The Goſpel-conſtitution was ſettled long before thou waſt born; Thou com'ſt too late with thy Exceptions (if thou hadſt any) againſt it. Remember, therefore, this is one

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of the unalterable determinations of this Gospel, *without holiness thou shalt never see God*, or (which amounts to the same) *thou canst not behold his face but in righteousness*. There is no word in all the Bible of more certain truth than this. In this also how apt are sinners foolishly to intangle themselves. The Gospel is true and to be believed, till they meet with something that crosses them, and goes against the hair, and then, they hope it is not so. But vain man! if once thou shake the truth of God, what wilt thou stay thy self upon? Is God true when he promises? and is he not as true when he threatens? if that be a true saying: *Say to the righteous it shall be well with him*---is not that as much to be regarded; *woe to the wicked it shall be ill with him. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him.* Are not these of equal authority? If thou hadst any reason to *hope*, thou mayest be happy though thou never be righteous; is there not as much reason to *fear* thou might'st be miserable though thou be; since the one is as much against the flat express word of God as the other? Let not thy love to sin betray thee out of all Religion, and thy wits together. Wherein wilt thou believe one upon the bare value of his word, that will lie to thee in any thing? Yea, and as it is the same authority that is affronted in every command, whence disobedience to one is a breach of all; so is the same veracity denyed in every truth; and the disbelief of one belies all, and wilt thou believe him

him in any thing, thou haſt proclaimed a lier in every thing? Therefore ſo little haſt thou gained by disbelieving the divine revelation in this thing; that thou haſt brought thy ſelf to this miſerable *Dilemma*; if the word of God be falſe thou haſt no foundation of any Faith left thee; if it be true, it dooms thee to eternal baniſhment from his bleſſed face, while thou remaineſt in thy unrighteouſneſs. It will not be thy advantage then to diſbelieve this Goſpel record, but to conſider it, and take it to heart, 'twill prove never the leſſe true, at laſt for that thou wilt not believe it, *ſhall thy unbelief make the truth of God of none effect?* And if thou wouldeſt but reaſonably conſider the caſe; methinks thou ſhouldeſt ſoon be convinc't. Since thou acknowledgeſt (as I ſuppoſe thee to do) that there are two ſtates of men in the other World, *a ſtate of bleſſedneſs*, and *a ſtate of miſery*; and two ſorts of men in this World, the righteous, and the unrighteous. Let thy reaſon and conſcience now judge, who ſhall be allotted to the one ſtate, and who to the other. Sure if thou acknowledge a righteous Judge of all the world, thou canſt non think he will turn men, promiſcuouſly into Heaven, or Hell at random, without diſtinction: Much leſs canſt thou be ſo abſurd, and mad, as to think all the unrighteous ſhall be ſaved, and the righteous periſh: and then what is left thee to judge, but that which I am now urging upon thee, that when the righteous ſhall be admitted to the viſion of Gods bleſſed face; the unrighteous ſhall be driven forth into outer darkneſs? It

It may be some here will be ready to say, but to what purpose is all this, they were of the same mind before; and cannot think that any one would ever say the contrary.

Nor do I think so either; but 'tis one thing not to believe a conclusion to be true, and another to profess a contrary belief. And one thing to believe a conclusion, another to think we believe it. Men often know not their own minds. In practical matters 'tis best seen what a mans belief is, by his practice. For when any profess to believe this or that practical truth, relating to their salvation, if they believe is not practically, *i. e.* with such a belief as will command their suitable practice, it matters not what belief they are of, or whether they were of that judgment or no. Yea it will prove in the issue, better for them they had been of another, when their own professed belief shall be urged against them. But let us consider a little how in practical matters of less concernment we would estimate a mans belief. You meet a Traveller upon the way who tells you, the Bridge over such an unpassable Rivet is broken down, and that if you venture, you perish; if you believe him you return; if you hold on, he reasonably concludes you believe him not; and will therefore be apt to say to you, if you will not believe me, you may make trial. Your Physician tells you a disease is growing upon you, that in a short time will prove incurable, and mortal; but if you presently use means, he shall prescribe, 'tis capable of an easie remedie.

die. How would you your ſelf have your belief of your Phiſitian judged of in this caſe; would you expect to be believed, if you ſhould ſay, you do not at all diſtruſt your Phiſitians integrity, and judgment, but yet you reſolve not to follow his directions? unleſs you would have us believe too, that you are weary of your life, and would fain be rid of it. There is no Riddle or Myſtery in this. How ridiculous would men make themſelves if in matters of common concernment they ſhould daily practice directly contrary to their profeſſed belief? how few would believe them ſerious, or in their wits? But however, call this believing, or what you will, we contend not about the name, the belief of ſuch a thing can no further do you good, you can be nothing the better for it, further then as it ingages you to take a courſe ſuitable and conſequent to ſuch a belief. To believe that there is a Hell, and run into it, that unrighteouſneſs perſiſted in will damn you; and yet live in it. To what purpoſe is it to make your boaſts of this Faith?

But ſince you are willing to call this believing; all the foregoing reaſoning is to ingage you to *conſider what you believe.* Do you believe that *unrighteouſneſs will be the death of your ſoul? will eternally ſeparate you from God,* and *the preſence of his glory?* and when you have reaſon'd the matter with your ſelf, you find it to be *certainly ſo; ſhould not ſuch a thing be more deeply pondered? The bare propoſal of an evident truth commands preſent aſſent:* but if I *further* bend my *mind*

to

to reason out the same thing to my self. I am occasioned to take notice of the grounds, dependencies, the habitudes of it, what it rests upon, & whither it tends, and thence more discern its importance, and of what moment it is; then I should have done if upon first view I had assented only, and dismist it my thoughts. And yet is it possible you should think this to be *true*, and not think it a most *important truth*? Is it a small matter in your account, whither you shall be blessed, or miserable for ever? whether you be sav'd, or perish eternally? Or is it considered by you according as the weight of the matter requires, that as you are found righteous, or unrighteous, so will it everlastingly fare with you?

You may possibly say, you already conclude your self righteous, therefore no further imploy your thoughts about it.

But methinks you should hardly be able how ever to put such a thing out of your thoughts; while as yet the final determination is not given in the case. If a man have a question yet depending concerning his life or estate: though his business be never so clear, he will hardly forget it, the trial not being yet past. And though in this matter, you have no reason to suspect errour, or corruption in your Judge (through which many honest causes may miscarry in an humane Judicature) yet have you no reason to suspect your self? If the holy Spirit hath *assured you* it hath not *stupified you*, but as you have then the less of *fear*, you have the more of *love*, and *joy*. Therefore you will not thence

thence mind ſuch a concernment the *leſs*, but with the *more delight*; and therefore alſo, moſt probably, with the more frequency, and intention. What a pleaſure will it be to review evidences, and ſay, lo here are the *Mediums* by which I make out my title to the Eternal Inheritance. Such, and ſuch characters give me the confidence, to number my ſelf among Gods righteous ones. And do you lead that heavenly raiſed life? do you live in thoſe ſweet and raviſhing comforts of the Holy Ghoſt, that may beſpeak you one whom he hath ſealed up to the day of redemption?

If you pretend not to any ſuch certainty, but rely upon your own judgment of your caſe; are you ſure you are neither miſtaken in the notion of the righteouſneſſe required, nor in the application of it to your own ſouls?

Poſſibly you may think your ſelf, becauſe in your ordinary dealings you wrong no man (your ſelf being judge) a very righteous perſon. But evident it is, when the Scripture uſes this tearm as diſcriptive of Gods own people, and to diſtinguiſh betweeen them that ſhall be ſaved, and periſh, it takes it in that comprehenſive ſenſe, before explained. And however, it requires, at leaſt, much more of thee under other expreſſions, as thou canſt hardly be ſo ignorant, but to know. And do but uſe thy reaſon here a little, and demand of thy ſelf. Is he to be accounted a righteous perſon that thinks it fit to avoid wronging a man, but makes no conſcience at all of wronging God? More particularly. Is it righteous to

live

live all thy dayes in a willing ignorance of the Author of thy being, never once to enquire *where is God my Maker?* Is it righteous to forget him, dayes without number, not to have him from day to day in all thy thoughts? Is it righteous to estrange thy self from him, and live as without him in the world? while thou liv'st, mov'st, and hast thy being in him? not to glorifie him in whose hands thy breath is? to be a lover of pleasure more then God? a worshipper, in thy very soul, of the creature, more then of the Creatour? Is it righteous to harden thy heart against his fear and love? to live under his power, and never reverence it, his goodness, and never acknowledge it? to affront his Authority, to belie his Truth, abuse his Mercy, impose upon his Patience, defie his Justice? to exalt thy own interest against his, the trifling petite interest of a silly worm, against the great allcomprehending interest of the common Lord of all the world? to cross his will, to do thy own? to please thy self, to the displeasing of him? whence hadst thou thy measures of Justice, if this be just? *Job 35.*

Again, is it righteous to deny the Lord that bought thee, to neglect that great salvation which he is the Authour of? And whereas he came to bless thée in turning thee from thine iniquities, wilfully to remain still in an accursed servitude to sin? *when he was made manifest to destroy the works of the Devil*, still to yield thy self *a captive at his will*? whereas he died that thou might'st not *any longer live to thy self*,

*ſelf, but to him that died for thee, and roſe again*, and that he *might redeem thee from thy vain converſation*, and that thou art ſo expreſly told that ſuch as ſtill lead ſenſual lives, mind earthly things, have not their converſation in heaven, are enemies to the Croſs of Chriſt: Is it no unrighteouſneſs that in theſe reſpects thy whole life, ſhould be nothing elſe but a conſtant contradiction to the very deſign of his dying? a perpetual Hoſtility, a very Tilting at his Croſs? Is there no unrighteouſneſs in thy obſtinate infidelity, that wickedly denies belief to his glorious Truths, acceptance of his gracious Offers, ſubjection to his holy Laws? no unrighteouſneſs in thy obſtinate, remorſleſs, impenitency? thy heart that cannot repent? that melts not while a crucified Jeſus amid'ſt his agonies, and dying pangs, cryes to thee from the Croſs, *O ſinner enough, thy hard heart breaks mine! yield at laſt, and turn to God.* Is it righteous to live as no way under Law to Chriſt? to perſiſt in actual rebellion againſt his juſt Government, which he died, and revived, and roſe again to eſtabliſh, over the living and the dead? yea, and that while thou pretendeſt thy ſelf a Chriſtian? In a word; Is it righteous to tread under foot the Son of God, to vilifie his Blood, and deſpiſe his Spirit? Is this the righteouſneſs that thou talkeſt of? are theſe thy qualifications for the everlaſtbleſſedneſs?

If thou ſay, thou confeſſeſt thou art *in thy ſelf*, in theſe ſeveral reſpects, altogether unrighteous; but thou hopeſt the righteouſ-

neſs of Chriſt, will be ſufficient to anſwer for all.

No doubt Chriſts Righteouſneſs is abundantly available to all the ends for which it was intended by the Father and Him; but it ſhall never anſwer all the ends that a fooliſh wicked heart will fondly imagine to it ſelf.

In ſhort, it ſerves to excuſe thy non performance of, and ſtands inſtead of thy perfect ſinleſs obedience to the *Law of works*; but it ſerves not inſtead of thy performance of what is required of thee, as the *condition of the Goſpel Covenant*. That is, It ſhall never ſupply the room of Faith, Repentance, Regeneration, Holineſs, the loving of Chriſt above all, and God in him; ſo as to render theſe unneceſſary, or ſalvation poſſible without them. There is not one *iota*, or tittle in the Bible, that ſo much as intimates, an unregenerate perſon, an unbeliever, an impenitent, or unholy perſon, ſhall be ſaved by Chriſts righteouſneſs; but enough to the contrary, every one knows, that hath the leaſt acquaintance with the Scriptures.

Vain Man what? is Chriſt devided, and devided againſt himſelf; Chriſt without, againſt Chriſt within? His ſufferings on the Croſs, and foregoing obedience, againſt his Spirit and Government in the Soul? Did Chriſt die, to take away the neceſſity of our being Chriſtians? And muſt his death ſerve, not to deſtroy ſin out of the world, but Chriſtianity? who hath taught thee ſo wickedly to miſunderſtand the deſign of Chriſts dying? And when

when the Scripture ſo plainly tells thee, *That God ſo loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believeth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* Joh 3.16. And, *That he became the Authour of eternal ſalvation to them that obey him, yea, and that he will come in flaming fire to take vengeance on them that know, and obey him not.* Heb 5.9. What ſhould induce thee to think thou mayſt be ſaved by him, whether thou believeſt, and obeyeſt or no?

No, if ever thou think to ſee God, and be happy in him; thou muſt have a righteouſneſs in thee, reſembling *his*: the very product the thing wrought in the work of regeneration. If ye know that he is righteous, ye know *that every one that doth righteouſneſs is born of him.* 1 Joh. 2. 29. Whereupon follows the deſcription of the bleſſedneſs of ſuch righteous ones in the beginning of the next Chapter. —*They are ſons —they ſhall be like* &c. So that in a word, without ſome ſight of God here, there's no ſeeing him hereafter; without ſome likeneſs to him now, none hereafter. And ſuch as are deſtitute of that heart-conformity to the Goſpel, wherein the Evangelical Righteouſneſs ſtands; are ſo far from it, that we may ſay to them, as our Saviour to the Jews, *Ye have neither heard his voice, nor ſeen his ſhape*, i. e. you have never had right notion, or any the leaſt true glimpſe of him; your hearts are wholly deſtitute of all Divine Impreſſions whatſoever. Joh. 5. 37.

8. We may further infer, *from this qualification of the ſubject of bleſſedneſs. That righte-*

*ousness is no vain thing.* That is not in vain that ends so well, and hath so happy an issue at last. Scripture tells us, that the *labour of* Pro. 10. 16. *the righteous tendeth to life*: and that we may understand it of their labour, as they are righteous: we are more plainly told that Chap. 11 14; Ver. 18. *righteousness tendeth to life*; and that to them that sow *righteousness shall be a sure reward.* Mat. 13. 43. *That the righteous shall shine as the Sun in the* Chap. 25. 46. *Kingdom of the Father.* —The righteous into eternal life. And we here see that *righteous-* Isa. 55 2. *ness* ends in the *blessed sight of Gods glorious face, in being satisfied with the Divine likeness*: Foolish sinners as justly upbraided that they spend their labour for that which *satisfies not*; takes much pains to no purpose; such are all Rom. 6. 20, 21. the works of sin, *toilsome*, fruitless; *what fruit had ye of those things* (viz. which ye wrought when you were *free from righteousness*) *whereof ye are now ashamed; for the end of those things is death.* But (it follows) *being now made free from sin, and become servants to God* (which is paraphrased above by *servants to righteousness*) *ye have your fruit unto holiness, & the end everlasting life.* The fruit is a continual increase of holiness, a growing more and more *like God*, till at last everlasting life, satisfaction with his likeness, do Crown and consummate all.

You have now what to answer to the Atheists profane Querie; *what profit is it to serve God?* to what purpose to lead so strict, and precise a life? you may now see to what purpose it is; and whereunto godliness (which righteousness here includes) is profitable (as having

having beſides what it intitles to here) *the promiſe of that life which is to come.*

There needs no more to diſcover any thing not to be vain (in as much as nothing can be ſaid to be but *in reference to an end*, as being good for nothing) then the eviction of theſe two things.

That it aims at a truly worthy, and valuable end; and that its tendencie thereto is direct, and certain.

In the preſent caſe both theſe are obvious enough at the firſt view.

For as to the former of them, all the world will agree without diſputing the matter, that the laſt end of man (*i.e.* which he ultimately propounds to himſelf) is his *beſt good*; and that he can deſign no further good to himſelf, then *ſatisfaction*; nothing after or beyond that; and what can afford it, if the viſion and participation of the Divine Glory do not?

As to the latter, beſides all that aſſurance given by Scripture-conſtitution to the righteous man, concerning his future reward; let the Conſciences be conſulted of the moſt beſotted ſinners, in any lucid interval, and they will give their ſuffrage (*Balaam* that ſo earneſtly followed the reward of unrighteouſneſs not excepted) that the way of righteouſneſs, is that only likely way to happineſs, and would therefore deſire to die, at leaſt, the righteous mans death, and that their latter end ſhould be like his. So is wiſdom (I might call it righteouſneſs too, the wicked man is the Scripture-Fool; and the righteous the wiſe

man) justified not by her children only, but by her enemies also.

And sure 'tis meet that she should be more openly justified by her Children, and that they learn to silence, and repress those misgiving thoughts; *Surely, I have washed my hands in vain, &c.* And *be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, for as much as they know their labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

Psal. 73. 13.

## CHAP. XV.

*Two other Inferences from the Consideration of the season of this blessedness. The former, That in as much as this blessedness is not attained in this life. The present happiness of Saints must in a great part consist in hope. The latter, That great is the wisdom and sagacity of the righteous man, which waves a present temporary happiness, and chuses that which is distant and future.*

IN as much as the season of this blessedness is not on this side the Grave; nor expected by Saints till they awake, we may further infer;

9. Ninthly. *That their happiness in the mean time doth very much consist in hope.* Or that hope must needs be of very great necessity, and use to them, in their present state for their comfort, and support. It were not, otherwise, spos-

poſſible to ſubſiſt in the abſence, and want of their higheſt good, while nothing in this lower world is, as to kind and nature, ſuitable to their deſires, or makes any colorable overture to them of ſatisfaction, and happineſs. Others (as the Pſalmiſt obſerves) *have their portion in this life*; that good, which as to the ſpecies and kind of it, is moſt grateful to them, is preſent, under view, within ſight; And (as the Apoſtle) *Hope that is ſeen is not hope, for what a man ſeeth, why doth he yet hope for it.* Rom. 8. 24. But thoſe whoſe more refined ſpirits (having received the firſt fruits of the holy Spirit of God) prompt them to groan after ſomething beyond time, and above this Sublunarie Sphere; of them, the Apoſtle there tell us, *that they are ſaved by hope.* They (as if he ſhould ſay) ſubſiſt by it; they were never able to hold out, were it not for their hope. And that an hope too, beyond this life, as is the hope of a chriſtian; *if in this life only we had hope in Chriſt*, &c. the hope of a Chriſtian as ſuch is ſuitable to its productive cauſe: the reſurrection of Chriſt from the dead; begotten to *a lively hope by the reſurrection*, &c. Thence is it, the hope of a renewed, never dying life; the hope of a bleſſed immortality; whereof Chriſts reſurrection was a certain argument and pledge. 1 Cor. 15. 19. 1 Pet. 1 3.

Indeed the new creature is, *ab origine*, and all along an *hoping creature* both in its *primum*, and its *porro eſſe*. 'Tis conceived, and formed, and nurſt up in hope. In its production, and in its progreſs towards perfection, 'tis manifeſtly influenc't thereby. In the firſt return

of the soul to God, hope being then planted as a part of the holy gracious Nature, now manifestly discovers it self, when the soul begins to act, (as turning, after the reception of the Divine influence, is its act) hope insinuates it self into (or induces rather) that very act. *Returning* is not the act of a *despairing*, but *hoping* soul. 'Tis God apprehended as reconcileable, that attracts and wins it: while he is look't upon as an implacable enemy, the soul naturally shuns him, and comes not nigh, till drawn *with those cords of a man, the bands of love.* While it says, *there is no hope*, it says with all (desperately enough) *I have loved strangers, and after them will I go.* But if *there be any hope in Israel concerning this thing.* If it can yet apprehend God willing to forgive, then *Let us make a covenant, &c.* This presently draws the hovering soul into a closure, and league with him. And thus is the union continued: *unsteadfastness in the Covenant of God*, is resolved into this *not fixing*, or fixing *of hope in him*, or (which amounts to the same, setting of hope in God is directed as a means to *steadfastness of spirit with him*, and *keeping of his Covenant. Revolting* souls are encouraged to *return* to the Lord, upon this consideration, that salvation is *hoped* for, in vain, from any other. The case being indeed the same, in all *after*-conversions as in the *first*. God, *as multiplying to pardon*; and still retaining the same name, *The Lord, the Lord gracious, and merciful* (which name in all the severalls that compose and make it up, *is in his*

Hos. 11. Jer. 2. Ezra 10.2,3. Psal. 78. 7,13. Ib. Jer. 3 a',23. Exod. 23.22.

(*Last*)

*Chriſt*) invites back to him the backſliding ſinner, and renews its thoughts of returning. And ſo is he afterwards under the teachings of grace led on by hope, thorough the whole courſe of Religion towards the future glory. Grace appears, teaching ſinners to deny ungoodlineſs, &c. in the *looking for the bleſſed hope, the glorious appearing of the great God, &c. So do they keep themſelves in the love of God; Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt unto eternal life.* Thus is the new creature formed in hope, and nouriſht in hope. And if its eye were upon pardon at firſt, 'tis more upon the promiſed glory afterwards. And yet that laſt end hath in a degree, its attractive influence upon it, from the *firſt* formation of it, 'tis even then taught to deſign for glory. 'Tis *begotten to the lively hope* (where though hope be taken objectively, as the appoſition ſhews of the following words, *to an inheritance*, yet the act is evidently connoted, for the *thing hoped for*, is meant under that notion, *as hoped for.*) And its whole following courſe is an aiming at glory; *a ſeeking glory, honour, immortality, &c.* Thus is the work of Sanctification carried on. *He that hath this hope purifieth himſelf.* Thus are leſſes ſuſtained; *The ſpoiling of goods taken joyfully, through the expectation of the better and enduring ſubſtance.* The moſt hazardous ſervices undertaken, even an Apoſtleſhip to a *deſpiſed Chriſt.--In the hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie hath promiſed.* All difficulties encountred, and overcome, while the *helmet is the hope of ſalvation.*

Titus 2. 11, 12.

Ro 2.7.
1 Joh 3.3.
Heb 10.34.

Tit 1.1,2.

1 Theſ 5.8.

All

All worldly evils are willingly endured, and all (such) good things quitted and forsaken for Christs sake, and his Elects. And if the question be ask't (as it was once of *Alexander*, when so frankly distributing his treasures among his followers) *what do you reserve for your self?* The resolved Christian makes (with him) that short and brave reply, *HOPE*. He lives upon things future and unseen. The *objects* any one converses with most, and in which his life is, as it were, bound up, are suitable to the *ruling principle of life* in him. They that are after *the flesh, do savour the things of the flesh*; Rev. 9. 5. *they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit*. The Principle of the fleshly life, is *Sense*: The principle of the Spiritual life, is *Faith*. Sense is a mean, low, narrow, incomprehensive principle, limited to a *point*. This Center of Earth; and τὸ νῦν (this now) of time. It can reach no *higher* then *terrene* things; nor *further* then *present things*. So brutish is the life of him that is led by it; wholly confined to *matter* and *time*.

*But the righteous live by Faith*. Their Faith *governs*, and *maintains* the life. They steer not their course according to what they *see*; but according to what they *believe*. And their daily *sustenance* is by the same kind of things. Their Faith influences, not their actions only, but their comforts, and enjoyments. They subsist by the things they believe; even invisible, and eternal things. But it is by the intervening exercise of hope, whose object is the same. The Apostle having told

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us from the Prophet, that the *juſt ſhall live by Faith*, preſently ſubjoyns a deſcription of that Faith they live by; *viz.* that it is *the ſubſtance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not ſeen*; it ſubſtantiates, and reallizes, evidences, and demonſtrates thoſe glorious objects ſo far above the reach, and Sphere of ſenſe. It is conſtantly ſent out to forage in the inviſible Regions, for the maintenance of this life. And thence fetches in the proviſions upon which *hope* feeds, to the ſtrengthening of the *heart*, the renewing of life, and ſpirits. Our inward man (ſaith the Apoſtle) *is renewed day by day*; while we *look*, or *take* aime (which is next in the ſeries of the diſcourſe for the intervening verſe is manifeſtly parenthetical) *not at the things that are ſeen, but at the things that are not ſeen; for the things that are ſeen are temporal, but the things that are not ſeen, are eternal.* And the word here rendred [*look*] doth plainly ſignifie the act of *hope*, as well as that of *faith*; for it doth not import a meer intuition, or beholding; a taking notice, or aſſenting onely that there is ſuch things, but a deſigning, or *ſcoping* at them (which is the very word) with an appropriative eye; as things that notwithſtanding their diſtance, or whatſoever imaginable difficultie, are hoped to be attained to, and enjoyed. And here are evidenly the diſtinct parts of Faith and Hope in this buſineſs; *Faith*, upon the Authority, and credit of the Divine Word, and Promiſe, perſwades the heart that there is ſuch a glorious ſtate of things

Heb. 2. 4.

Heb. 10. 37.

Chap. 11. 1.

2 Cor. 4. 16, 18.

ἀποβλέπομεν

things reserved for Saints in general (Faith can go no further, for the Word of Promise goes no further) and so serves instead of eyes, in the Divine Light, to view those glories; or it presents them (as so many substantial realities) demonstrates them, submits them to view; whence *Hope* reaches forth to them, contends against, and triumphs over all attending difficulties? and possesses them; gives the soul an early, anticipated fruition of them, for its present support, and relief. So that it *rejoyces in the hope of the glory of God.* It might well therefore be said, *I had fainted, if I had not believed* (or who can express how sad my case had been, if I had not believed? for there is an elegant *Aposiopesis* in the Hebrew Text, the words [I had fainted] being supplyed in the translation. If I had not believed, what had become of me then? *q. d.*) In as much as faith feeds, as it were, those hopes which more immediately, the Lord makes use of, for the strengthening his peoples hearts, as it is intimated in the following words, compared with *Psal.* 31. 24. In the present case; *Faith* ascertains the heart, of the truth of the Promises; so that thus the Soul states the case to it self; *Though I have not walkt to and fro in those upper regions, nor taken a view of the heavenly inheritance, though I have not been in the third heavens, and seen the ineffable glory; yet the Gospel-revelation which hath brought life, and immortality to light, the word of the eternal God, who hath told me this is the state of things, in the other world; cannot but be true; my faith may therefore*

Rom. 5 2. Chap. 12. 12.

Psal. 27. 13, 14.

*therefore be to me inſtead of eyes; and the Divine teſtimony muſt ſupply the place of light; both together give, methinks, a fair proſpect of thoſe far diſtant glorious objects, which I have now in view.* Now this awakens *hope*, and makes it revive, and run to imbrace what Faith hath diſcovered in the Promiſe.——*In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie hath promiſed.* Tit. 1. 2. 'Tis *the Word of God that cauſes the ſoul to hope,* Pſal. 119. 49. (i. e. believed for disbelieved, it ſignifies nothing with it) and that, not onely as it contains *a narration*, but *a promiſe*, concerning the future eſtate. I may without much emotion of heart, hear from a Traveller the deſcription of a pleaſant Country, where I have not been; but if *the Lord of that Country* give me, beſides the account of it, an aſſurance of enjoying rich, and ample poſſeſſions there; *this* preſently begets an *hope*; the pleaſure whereof would much relieve a preſent diſtreſſed eſtate; and which nothing, but that of actual poſſeſſion can exceed. That 'tis not more ſo with us here, admits of no excuſe. Is God leſs to be believed then a man? will we deny him the priviledge of being able to diſcover his mind, and the truth of things credibly? which we ordinarily allow to any one that is not *a convicted Lier?* Chriſt expects his Diſciples ſhould very confidently aſſure themſelves, of the preparations made for them in another world, upon that very ground, alone, that he had not told them the contrary. *Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe alſo in me. In my Fathers Houſe*

*are*

Joh. 14. 1, 2. *are many manſions, if it were not, ſo I would have told you. I go to prepare, &c.* Intimating to them, they ought to have that opinion of his plainneſs, and ſincerity, as never to imagine he would have proſelyted them to a Religion, that ſhould undo them in this world; if there were not a ſufficient recompence awaiting them in the other; but he would have certainly have let them know, the worſt of their caſe: much more, might he expect they ſhould be confident, upon his ſo often, and expreſly *telling them that ſo it is.*

If his *ſilence* might be a ground of hope, much more his *word.* And ſurely ſo grounded an hope, cannot but be conſolatory; and relieving in this ſad interval, till the awaking *hour.*

Inferen. 10. Laſtly, Since this bleſſedneſs of the righteous, is as to the ſeaſon of it, future, not expected till they awake, we may infer. *That 'tis great wiſdom, and ſagacitie, that guides the righteous mans choice; while he waves a preſent, and temporary, and choſes this future expected bleſſedneſs.*

'Tis true, that Philoſophy hath been wont to teach us, that *choice* or election, hath no place about the *end*, becauſe that is but *one*; and choice always implyes a *competition.* But that very reaſon evinces that in our preſent *ſtate*, and *caſe*; choice muſt have place about the *end.* That Philoſophy might have ſuited better the ſtate of innocent *Adam*; when there was nothing to blind, and bribe a mans judgment, or occaſion it to deliberate, about the *ſupreme end* (then it might be truly ſaid, *deli-*

*beration*

*beration it ſelf, was a defection*) nor to pervert, and miſincline his will; and ſo its action, in *propoſing its end*, would be ſimple *intention*, not *choice*.

But ſo hath the Apoſtaſie, and ſin of man, blinded and befooled him, that he is at a loſs about nothing more, then what is the *chief good*. And though S. *Auguſtine* reduce *Varro's* 288. differing Sects about it to 12. that's enough to prove (but daily experience doth it more convincingly, and ſadly) a *real*, though moſt *unjuſt* competition. Therefore a ſinner can never be bleſſed, without chuſing his bleſſedneſs; and therein, it highly concern's him to chuſe aright; and that a Spirit of Wiſdom, and Counſel guide his choice. While Man had not as yet fal'n to deliberate whether he ſhould adhere to God, or no; was a gradual declenſion, the very inchoation of his fall; but having fal'n; *neceſſity* makes that a *vertue*, which was a *wickneſs before*. There's no returning to God, without *conſidering our ways*. The ſo much altered ſtate of the caſe, quite alters the nature of the things. It was a conſulting to *do evil*, before; now, to *do good*. And hence alſo *chuſing the Lord to be our God*, becomes a *neceſſary duty*. Which is to make choice of this very bleſſedneſs, that conſiſts in the knowledge, likeneſs, and enjoyment of him. And now, in as much as this bleſſedneſs is not fully attained by the longing ſoul, till time expire, and its eternity commence; here's a great diſcovery of that Wiſdom which guides this happy choice. There is great wiſdom in *proſpection*;

*De Civit. Dei, lib.* 19.

Joſh. 24.

*Elion*; in taking care of the future; and at how much the further distance, one can provide; so much the greater reputation of wisdom it justly acquired to him; Yea, we seem to place the summe of *practical wisdom*, in this one thing, while we agree to call it *providence*, under the contracted name of *prudence*. The wise man makes it at least an evidence, or part of wisdom, when he tells us the prudent foreseeth, &c. The righteous man so far excells in this faculty; as that his eye looks thorow all the periods of time; and penetrates into eternity, recommends to the Soul a blessedness of that same stamp, and alloy; that will endure, and last for ever. It will not content him to be happy for an *hour*, or for any Space, that can have an end; after which it shall be possible to him, to look back, and recount with himself how happy he was once. Nor is he much solicitous, what his present state be; if he can but find he is upon safe tearms, as to his future, and eternal state. As for me, saith the Psalmist (he, herein, sorts, and severs himself from them, whose portion was in this life) I [*shall*] *behold—I* [*shall*] *be satisfied, when I awake*; he could not say it was well with him; but it shall be *q. d.* Let the purblind, short-sighted Sensualist, imbrace this present world; who can see no further; Let me have my portion in the world to come; may my soul always lie open to the impression of *the powers of the coming world*; and, *in this*; so use every thing, as to be *under the power of nothing*. What are the pleasures of sin

Prov. 22.3.

*Est beati viri portam dare ex-it erit.*

that

that are but for a ſeaſon; or what the ſufferings of this *now*; this moment of affliction, to the glory that ſhall be revealed; to the exceeding, and eternal glory. He conſiders patient, afflicted godlineſs will triumph at laſt; when riotous, raging wickedneſs ſhall lament for ever. He may for a time weep, and mourn, while the world rejoyces; he may be ſorrowful, but his ſorrow ſhall be turned into joy; and his joy none ſhall take from him. Surely, *here is wiſdom*; this is the wiſdom that is from above, and tends thither. *This is to be wiſe unto ſalvation.* The righteous man is a judicious man; he hath, *in a meaſure*, that judgment (wherein the Apoſtle prayes the *Philippians* might *abound*) to approve the things that are excellent, and accordingly to make his choice. This is a ſenſe (little thought of by the Authour) wherein that ſober Speech of the voluptuous Philoſopher is moſt certainly true. *A man cannot live happily, without living wiſely.* No man ſhall ever enjoy the eternal pleaſures hereafter, that in this acquits not himſelf wiſely here; even *in this chuſing the better part, that ſhall never be taken from him.* In this the plain *righteous man*, out-vies the greateſt Sophies, the Scribe, the diſputer, the Politician, the prudent Mamoniſt, the facete Wit: who in their ſeveral kinds, all think themſelves highly to have merited to be accounted wiſe. And that this point of wiſdom ſhould eſcape *their* notice; and be the principal thing with *him*, can be reſolved into nothing elſe but the *Divine good pleaſure.* In this contemplation, our

Joh. 16. 20, 22.

Phil. 1. 9, 10.

*Epicurus.*

Lord Jeſus Chriſt is ſaid to have *rejoyced in Spirit* (it even put his great comprehenſive ſoul into an extaſie) *Father, I thank thee, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and revealed them to babes*: Even ſo Father, *becauſe it pleaſed thee.* Here was a thing fit to be reflected on, as a piece of Divine Royalty, a part, *worthy the Lord of heaven and earth.* And what ſerious ſpirit would it not amaze, to weigh, and ponder this caſe awhile; to ſee men excelling in all other kinds of knowledge, ſo far excelled by thoſe they moſt contemn, in the higheſt point of wiſdom; ſuch as know how to ſearch into the abſtruſeſt Myſteries of *Nature*; that can unravel, or ſee through the moſt perplext intrigues of *State*; that know how to ſave their own Stake, and ſecure their private Intereſts, in whatſoever times; yet ſo little ſeen (*often*; for not *many* wiſe) in the matters that concern an eternal felicity! It puts me in mind of (what I find obſerved by ſome) the *particular madneſs* (*ademtitia quaedam*) as 'tis called; when perſons, in every thing elſe, capable of ſober, rational diſcourſe; when you bring them to ſome one thing (that in reference to which they became diſtempered at firſt) they rave, and are perfectly mad. How many that can manage a diſcourſe with great reaſon, and judgment, about other matters, who when you come to diſcourſe with them about the affairs of *practical godlineſs*, and which moſt directly tend to that *future ſtate of bleſſedneſs*, they are at their wits end;

Luke 10, 21.

end; know not what to ſay. They ſavour not thoſe things. Theſe are things not underſtood, *but by ſuch to whom it is given.* And ſurely that *given wiſdom* is the moſt excellent wiſdom. Sometimes God doth, as it were, ſo far gratifie the world, as to ſpeak their own language; and call them wiſe that affect to be called ſo, and that wiſdom which they would fain have go under that name; *Moſes* 'tis ſaid was skil'd in all the *wiſdom of Egypt*, &c. but at other times he expreſly calls thoſe wiſe men fools; and their wiſdom, folly, and madneſs; or annexes ſome disgraceful adject, for diſtinction ſake; or applies thoſe appellatives Ironically, and in manifeſt deriſion. No doubt, but any ſuch perſon as was repreſented in the parable would have thought himſelf to have done the part of a very wiſe man in entertaining ſuch deliberation and reſolvs, as we find he had there with himſelf. How ſtrange was that to his ears, *Thou fool, this night ſhall they require thy ſoul, &c.* Their wiſdom is ſometimes ſaid to be *fooliſh*, or elſe called the *wiſdom of the fleſh*, or *fleſhly wiſdom*, ſaid to be earthly, ſenſual, deviliſh, they are ſaid to be *wiſe to do evil*; while to do good, they have no underſtanding; they are brought ſometimes, as it were, upon the ſtage with their wiſdom, to be the matter of divine triumph; where is the wiſe? and that which they account fooliſhneſs is made to confound their *wiſdom*. And indeed do they deſerve to be thought wiſe; that are ſo buſily intent upon momentary trifles; and trifle with eternal concernments; that prefer va-

Act. 7. 22.

Luke 12.

niſhing ſhadows to the everlaſting glory? that follow lying vanities, and forſake their own mercies? Yea, will they not ceaſe to be wiſe in their own eyes alſo; when they ſee the iſſue, and reap the fruits of their fooliſh choice? when they find the happineſs they preferred before this eternal one is quite over; and nothing remains to them of it, but an afflictive remembrance. That the torment they were told would follow, is but now beginning; and without end: when they hear from the mouth of their impartial Judge; *Remember you in your life time had your good things, and my faithful ſervants their evil; now they muſt be comforted, and you tormented.* When they are told *you have received the conſolation*; you were *full,* Luke 6.24,25. *ye did laugh, now you muſt pine, and mourn, and weep.* Will they not then be as ready to befool themſelves, and ſay as they; *be thoſe (righte-* Wiſd. 5 3. &c. *ous ones) are they whom we ſometimes had in deriſion, and for a proverb of reproach; we fools counted their life madneſs, and that their end was without honour, but now how are they numbred among the ſons of God, and their lot is among the Saints.* They that were too wiſe before, to mind ſo mean a thing as *Religion* (the world 1 Cor. 1. *through wiſdom knew not God, ſtrange wiſdom!* that could ſo *wiſely* baffle Conſcience; and put fallacies upon their own ſouls; that had ſo ingenious ſhifts to elude a conviction; and direct any ſerious thought, from faſtening upon their ſpirits, that were wont ſo *ſlily* to jeere holineſs; ſeemed as they meant to laugh Religion out of countenance, * they will now

* *Folly is joy to him that is deſtitute of wiſdom.*

know

know that *a circumſpect walking*, a faithful *redeeming of time, and improving it in order to eternity*, was to do, not *as fools, but as wiſe*; and begin to think of themſelves, now as loſt, as all wiſe, and ſober men thought of them before. Prov. 15 21.

## CHAP. XVI.

*The ſecond general Head of the improvement or uſe of the Doctrine propounded from the Text, containing certain Rules or preſcriptions of duty connatural thereto.* Rule 1. *That we ſettle in our minds the true notion of this bleſſedneſs.* Rule 2. *That we compare the temper of our own ſpirits with it, and labour thence to diſcern whether we may lay claim to it or no.*

THus far we have the the account of the *Truths* to be conſidered, and weigh'd, that have dependence on the Doctrine of the Text.

Next follows the duties to be practis'd, and done in reference thereto, which I ſhall lay down in the enſuing *Rules* or Preſcriptions.

*That we admit, and ſettle, the diſtinct notion of this bleſſedneſs in our minds, and judgements.* 1.

That we fix in our own ſouls apprehenſions agreeable to the account this Scripture hath given us of it. This is a counſel, leading, and introductive to the reſt; and which if it

obtain with us, will have a general influence upon the whole courſe of that *practice*, which the Doctrine already opened, calls for. As our apprehenſions of this bleſſedneſs are more diſtinct, and clear; it may be expected more powerfully to command our hearts, and lives. Hence it is in great part, the Spirits, and converſations of Chriſtians have ſo little *ſavour*, and *appearance* of *heaven* in them. We reſt in ſome general, and confuſed notion of it; in which there is little either of efficacy, or pleaſure; we deſcend not into a particular inquiry, and conſideration what it is. Our thoughts of it, are gloomy, and obſcure; and hence is our Spirit naturally liſtleſs, and indifferent towards it: and rather contents it ſelf to ſit ſtill in a Region all lightſome round about, and among objects it hath ſome preſent acquaintance with, then venture it ſelf forth as into a new world which it knows but little of. And hence our lives are low and carnal: they look not as though we were ſeeking the heavenly Country; and indeed, who can be in good earneſt in ſeeking after an unknown ſtate? This is owing to our negligence, an infidelity. The bleſſed God hath not been ſhy, and reſerv'd; hath not hidden, or concealed from us the glory of the other world; nor lock't up Heaven to us; nor left us to the uncertain gueſſes of our own imagination: the wild fictions of an unguided phanſie; which would have created us a poetical heaven only, and have mock't us with falſe *Elyſiums*. But, though much be yet within the vail, he hath been libe-

liberal in his diſcoveries to us. Life and Immortality are brought to light in the Goſpel. The future bleſſedneſs (though ſome refined Heathens have had near gueſſes at it) is certainly apprehenſible by the meaſure onely of Gods revelation of it. For who can determine, with certainty, of the effects of Divine *good pleaſure* (*'Tis your Fathers good pleaſure to give you a Kingdom.*) Who can tell, before hand, what ſo free and boundleſs goodneſs will do: further then as he himſelf diſcovers it? The *diſcovery* is as free as the *donation*. *The things that eye hath not ſeen, and ear* 1 Cor. 2. 9. *not heard, and which have not entred into the heart of man, God hath revealed to us by his Spirit*: *and it follows*, v. 12. *We have received the Spirit of God, that we might know the things freely given us of God*: The Spirit is both the principle of the *external revelation*, as having inſpired the Scriptures which foreſhew this glory, and of the *internal revelation*, alſo to enlighten blind minds that would otherwiſe (μυωπάζειν) never be able to diſcover things at ſo great a diſtance, *ſee afar off*. Therefore called the *Spirit of wiſdom and revelation*, by which the *eyes of the underſtanding are inlightned to know the hope of that calling, and the riches* Eph. 1. 17. *of the glory of his inheritance* [*among*] *the Saints* (as the is there is moſt fitly to be rendred.)

But this *internal* diſcovery is made by the mediation, and interveniencie of the *external*: Therefore having that before our eyes we are to apply our minds to the ſtudy, and

conſideration of it; and in that way, to expect the free illumination of the holy Spirit. In the mean time we muſt charge our ignorance, and the darkneſs of our cloudy thoughts, touching theſe things, upon our careleſneſs, that we do not attend, or our incredulity, that we will not believe what God hath revealed concerning them: 'tis therefore a dutiful attention, and reverential Faith that muſt ſettle and fix the notion of this bleſſedneſs. If we will not *regard*, nor *give credit* to what God hath diſcovered concerning it, we may ſit ſtill in a torpid, diſconſolate darkneſs, which we our ſelves are the authors of, or (which is no leſs pernicious) compaſs our ſelves with ſparks beaten out of our own Forge; walk in the light of our own fire, cheat our ſouls with the fond dream of an imagined Heaven, no where to be found, till we at length lye down in ſorrow. How perverſe are the imaginations of men in this (as in reference to the *way*, ſo) in reſpect of the *end* alſo: For, as they take upon them to fancy another *way* to happineſs quite beſides, and againſt the plain word of God; ſo do they imagine to themſelves another kind of happineſs; ſuch as ſhall gratifie onely the ſenſual deſires; a *Mahometan* (indeed a Fools) Paradiſe; or, at beſt, 'tis but a negative Heaven; they many times entertain in their thoughts (of which their ſenſe too is the onely meaſure) a ſtate wherein nothing ſhall offend, or incommodate the fleſh; in which they ſhall not hunger, or thirſt, or feel want; and when they have thus

thus ſtated the matter in their own thoughts; we cannot beat them out of it, but that they *deſire to go to heaven* (*viz.* the heaven of their own making) when did they conceive it *truly*, and *fully*, they would find their hearts to abhor from it, even as hell it ſelf.

Therefore here we ſhould exerciſe an authority over our ſelves; and awaken conſcience to its proper work and buſineſs; and demand of it, *Is it not reaſonable theſe divine diſcoveries ſhould take place with me?* hath not God ſpoken plainly enough? why ſhould my heart any longer hang in doubt within me, or look wiſhly towards future glory, as if it were an uncouth thing? or is it reaſonable to confront my own imaginations to his diſcoveries? Charge conſcience with the duty it owes to God in ſuch a caſe; and let his revelations be received with the reverence and reſignation which they challenge; and *in them* ſtudy and contemplate the bleſſedneſs of awakened ſouls: till you have agreed with your ſelf fully how to conceive it. Run over every part of it in your thoughts, view the ſeveral divine excellencies, which you are, hereafter, to ſee, and imitate; and think what every thing will contribute to the ſatisfaction and contentment of your Spirits. This is a matter of unſpeakable conſequence.

Therefore, to be as clear as is poſſible, you may digeſt what is recommended to you in this *Rule*, into theſe more particular directions.

1. *Reſolve with your ſelves to make the divine revelation of this bleſſedneſs the prime meaſure, and reaſon*

*reason of all your apprehensions concerning it*; Fix that purpose in your own hearts, so to order all your conceptions about it, that when you demand of your selves, What do I conceive of the future blessedness? and why do I conceive so? the *divine revelation* may answer both the questions. I apprehend what God hath revealed, and because he hath so revealed. The Lord of *heaven* sure best understands it; and can best help us to the understanding of it. If it be said of the *origen of this world* Heb. 11. 3. *visu vuidu*, it may much more be said of the *state of the other, we understand it by faith.* That must inform, and perfect our intellectuals in this matter.

2. *Therefore, reject and sever from the notion of this blessedness, whatsoever is alien to the account Scripture gives us of it.* Think not that sensual pleasure, that a liberty of sinning, that an exemption from the divine dominion, distance and estrangedness from God (which by nature you wickedly affect) can have any ingrediency into (or consistency with) this state of blessedness.

3. *Gather up into it whatsoever you can find by the Scripture-discovery to appertain or belong thereto.* Let your notion of it be to your uttermost, not only *true*, but *comprehensive*, and *full*; and as particular and positive, as Gods revelation will warrant: Especially remember, 'tis a spiritual blessedness; that consists in the refining, and perfecting of your Spirits, by the vision and likeness of the holy God; and the *satisfying* of them thereby for ever.

4. *Get*

4. *Get the notion of this blessedness deeply imprinted in your minds*; so as to abide with you, that you may not be alwayes at a loss; and change you apprehensions every time you come to *think of it*: Let a once-well formed *Idea*, a clear full state of it be *preserv'd* entire: and be (as a lively image) alwayes before your eyes; which you may readily view upon all occasions.

2. *That having well fixed the notion of this blessedness in your minds, you seriously reflect upon yourself, and compare the temper of your Spirit with it: that you may find out how it is affected thereto; and thence judge in what likelihood you are of enjoying it.* 2 *Rule.*

The general aversion of mens Spirits to this so necessary work of *self-reflection* is one of the most deplorable Symptoms of lapsed, degenerate humanity. The wickedness that hath overspread the nature of man, and a secret *conscitiousness*, and *misgiving*, hath made men afraid of themselves, and studiously to decline all acquaintance with their own souls; to shun themselves as *Ghosts and Spellives*; they cannot indure to *appear* to themselves. You can hardly impose a severer task upon a wicked man, than to go retire an hour or two, and commune with himself, he knows not how to *face his own thoughts*: His own soul is a Devil to him (as indeed it will be in hell, the most frightful, tormenting Devil) Yet what *power* is there, in man, more excellent, more appropriate to reasonable nature, than that of *reflecting*, of turning his thoughts upon himself?

self. Sense must here confess it self out done. The eye that sees other objects cannot see it self. But the mind, *a rational Sun*, can, not only project its beams, but revert them; make its thoughts turn inward. It can see its own face, contemplate it self. And how useful an indowment is this to the nature of man? If he err he might perpetuate his error, and wander infinitely, if he had not this self-reflecting power, and, if he do well never know, without it, the comfort of a rational self-approbation. Which comfort Paganish morality hath valued so highly, as to account it did associate a man with the inhabitants of heaven; and make him lead his life as among the gods (as their Pagan language is) Though the name of this reflecting power [*Conscience*] they were less acquainted with; the thing it self they reckon'd as a kind of *indwelling Deity*, (as may be seen at large in those Discourses of *Maximus Tyrius*, and *Apuleius* both upon the same subject *concerning the god of Socrates*) And another giving this precept, "*Familiarize thy* "*self with the gods*; adds, "and this shalt "thou do, if thou bear thy mind becomingly "towards them; being well pleased with the "things they give, and doing the things that "may please thy *Daemon* or *Genius*, whom "(saith he) the most high God (which they "mean by *Jupiter*) hath put into every man as "as a derivation or extraction from himself "(ἀπόσπασμα) to be his president and guide, "viz. every ones own mind and reason.

Συζῆν θεοῖς. Συζῆ δὲ θεοῖς ὁ συνεχῶς δεικνὺς ἑαυτοῖς τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην ψυχὴν, ἀρεσκομένην μὲν ἃ τοῖς ἀποπεμφθεῖσιν· ποιοῦσαν δὲ ὅσα βούλεται ὁ δαίμων, ὃν ἑκάστῳ προστάτην, &c. —ὅτος δέ ἐστιν ἑκάστου τῆς ἡγεμονικὸς λόγος. *Marc. Antonin. Lib.* 5.

And this *mind or reason* in that notion of it, as

as we *approve* our selves to it, and *study* to please it; is the same thing we intend by the name of *Conscience*.

And how high account they had of this work of *self-reflection*, may appear in that they entituled the Oracle to that document *Know thy self*, esteeming it above humane discovery, and that it could have no lower than a divine Original; therefore consecrating and writing it up in golden Characters in their Delphick Temple (as *Pliny* informs * us) for an heavenly-inspired dictate.

*Ecteło descendit ὀυρανόθεν.*

*Hist. Mundi* The wisedom and significancy of which Dedication *Plato* also (in *Alcibiad.* 1.) takes notice of.

Among Christians that enjoy the benefit of the Gospel-revelation, in which men may behold themselves, as one may *his natural face in a glass*, how highly should this self-knowledge be prized, and how fully attained? The Gospel discovers, at the same time, the ugly deformities of a mans soul, and the means of attaining a true spiritual comliness; Yea it is it self the instrument of impressing the divine image, and glory upon mens Spirits; which when it is in any measure *done* they become most sociable, and conversable with themselves; and when 'tis but *in doing*, it so convincingly and with so piercing energy, layes open the very thoughts of mens hearts, so thoroughly rips up and dissects the soul, so directly turns and strictly holds a mans eye, intent upon himself; so powerfully urges, and obliges the sinner to mind and study his own soul; that, where it hath affected any thing, been any way operative upon mens spirits, *they* are certainly supposed to be in a good measure

Heb. 4. 12.

measure acquainted with themselves, whatever others are. Therefore the Apostle bids the Corinthians if they desire a proof of the *power and truth* of his ministery; to consult themselves, [*examine your selves*] and presently subjoyns *know ye not your own selves?* intimating it was an unsupposeable thing they should be ignorant; What? Christians, and not know yourselves? Can you have been under the Gospel so long, and be strangers to yourselves? none can think it. Sure 'tis a most reproachful thing; a thing full of ignominy, and scandal, that a man should name himself a Christian; and yet be under grosse ignorance touching the temper, and bent of his own soul. It signifies that such a one understands little of the design and tendency of the very religion he pretends to be of: Yet he was a Christian by meer chance, that he took up, and continues his profession in a dream. Christianity aims at nothing; it gets a man nothing; if it do not procure him a better Spirit? 'tis an empty insignificant thing, it hath no design in it at all, if it do not design this. It pretends to nothing else. It doth not offer men secular advantages, emoluments, honours, it hath no such aim to make men in that sense, rich, or great, or honourable, but to make them *holy*, and fit them for God. He therefore loses all his labour, and reward, and shews himself a vain trifler in the matters of Religion, *that makes not this the scope and mark of his Christian profession*, and practice, and herein he can do nothing without a constant self-inspection.

2 Cor. 13. 5.

spection. As it therefore highly *concerns*, it well *becomes* a Christian under the Gospel, to be in a continual observation, and study of himself; that he may know to what purpose he is a Christian; and take notice what (or whether any) good impressions be yet made upon his Spirit; whether he gain any thing by his Religion. And if a man enter upon an enquirie into himself; what more important question can he put then this; *In what posture am I as to my last and chief end?* how is my Spirit framed towards it? This is the intendment and business of the Gospel, *To fit souls for blessedness*: and therefore if I could enquire, what am I the better for the Gospel? this is the sense and meaning of that very question, is my soul wrought by it to any better disposition for blessedness? Upon which the resolution of this depends; *am I ever likely to enjoy it, yea or no?* That which may make my heart, not deplorably stupid, shake, and tremble; that such a thing should be drawn into question; but the case, with the most, requires it, and it must be so. 'Tis that therefore, I would fain here, *awaken souls* to, and *assist them* in; that is, propound something (in pursuance of the present direction) which might both *awaken them* to move this great question, *and help* them in discussing it. Both which will be done in shewing the *importance* of this latter *ultimate question in it self*, and then the *subserviencie of the former subordinate one, towards the deciding it.* These two things therefore I shall a little stay upon.

1. To

1. To shew and urge the requisiteness of debating with ourselves, the likelihood, or hopefulnesse of our enjoying this blessednesse.

2. To discover that the *present habitude*, or dispositednes of our Spirits to it, is a very proper apt medium, whereby to judge thereof.

First, As to the former of these; methinks our business should do it self, and that the very mention of such a blessedness, should *naturally* prompt souls to bethink themselves, *doth it belong to me? have I any thing to do with it?* Methinks every one that hears of it should be beforehand with me; and prevent me here. Where is that stupid soul that reckons it an indifferent thing to attain this blessed state, or fall short of it? When thou heares this is the common expectation of Saints, *to behold the face of God, and be satisfi'd with his likeness, when they awake*; Canst thou forbear to say with thy self, and what shall become of me when I awake! what kind of awaking shall I have! shall I awake amid'st the beams of glory, or flames of wrath? If thou canst be perswaded to think this no matter of indifferency; then stir up thy drowsie soul to a serious inquirie, how 'tis likely to fare with thee for ever; and to that purpose put thy conscience to it, to give a free, sincere answer to these few Queries.

1. Canst thou say, thou art already *certain* of thy eternal blessednes? Art thou so *sure*, that thou need'st not enquire. I know not who thou art that now readest these lines, and

and therefore cannot judg of thy confidence, whether it be right or wrong; onely that thou may'ſt not anſwer too haſtily, conſider a little; that *certainty of ſalvation is no common thing*: not among (I ſpeak you ſee of ſubjective certainty) the heirs of ſalvation themſelves. How many of Gods holy ones, that cannot ſay they are *certain*, yea how *few*, that can ſay they are? That exhortation to a Church of Saints, *Work out your ſalvation with fear and trembling* (they of whom he expreſſeth ſuch confidence, *Chap.* 1. 6. over whom he ſo glories, Chap. 4. 1.) implyes this to be no common thing. So doth Chriſts advice to his Diſciples, *Strive to enter in at the ſtrait gate*; and St. *Peters* to the ſcattered *Jews* (that he ſaith had obtained *like pretious faith, &c.*) *give diligence to make your calling and election ſure*, with many more paſſages of like import. Yea, how full is the Scripture of the complaints of *ſuch* crying out of broken bones, of feſtering wounds, of diſtraction by divine terrours. Now what ſhall we ſay in this caſe, when ſo eminent Saints have left us Records of the diſtreſſes and agonies of their Spirits, under the apprehended diſpleaſure of God, may it not occaſion us to ſuſpend a while, and conſider; have we much more reaſon to be confident then they? And do we know none that lead ſtricter, and more holy lives then we, that, are yet in the dark, and at a loſſe in judging their Spiritual ſtates? I will not ſay that we *muſt* therefore think our ſelves *bound* to doubt, becauſe another poſſibly Phil. 2. 12.

ter then we doth ſo. Unknown accidents may much vary the caſes. But, who would not think that reaſon, and modeſty had quite forſaken the world, to hear (where the odds is ſo vaſtly great) the vain boaſts of the looſe generality, compared with the humble, ſolicitous doubts of many ſerious knowing Chriſtians? To ſee *ſuch* trembling about their ſoul concernments, who have walk't with God, and ſerved him long in prayers, and tears; when multitudes that have nothing whereon to bottom a confidence, but *Pride*, and *Ignorance*; ſhall pretend themſelves certain! If, drawing breath a while, thou wilt ſuſpect thou have reaſon not to be peremptory in thy confidence; thou wilt ſure think thy ſelf concern'd to inquire further. Urge thy Soul then with this queſtion again and again, art thou yet certain, yea or no.

2. Is it a comfortable ſtate to be *uncertain*, or to have before thee apparent grounds of a rational, and juſt doubt? For cauſeleſs doubts may ſooner vaniſh, when their cauſeleſneſs is once diſcovered; and ſo they are leſs likely to keep a perſon that is capable of underſtanding his own caſe, under a ſtated diſcomfort. But I ſuppoſe thee, in order to the anſwering the foregoing Querie, to have in ſome meaſure conſidered thy caſe; and that, with a preponderating apprehenſion of danger in it, thou returneſt it *uncertain*. Uncertain man! and what, wilt thou remain uncertain? wilt thou ſit ſtill ſo, till thou periſh? ſhall thy life hang in doubt, and thy ſoul be in jeopardy

every

every hour, till the everlaſting flames reſolve the doubt; and put the matter out of queſtion with thee? What courſe canſt thou apply thy ſelf to, but to inquire, and ſearch further into thy own ſtate, to avoid the torture of thy own fears, the pangs, and dreadful expectations of a palpitating miſgiving heart; 'tis tru, that inquiſitive, diligent doubtfulneſs, hath hope, and comfort in it. But doubtfulneſs, joyned with a reſolution of caſting off all further care, is utterly deſperate, and diſconſolate; what remains to thee in that caſe, but *a fearful, looking for a fiery indignation*? how canſt thou paſs an hour in peace, while thou apprehendeſt it unlikely, thou ſee the face, and be ſatisfied with the image of God, do not thy own thoughts repreſent to thee the amazing ſights, the horrid images which ſhall for ever entertain, and poſſeſs thy ſoul? Art thou not daily haunted with Divine Horrors? when thou ſayeſt at night, thy *bed ſhall refreſh thee*, art thou not *terrified with dreams, and affrighted with viſions*? Doſt thou not ſay in the morning, would to God it were evening, and in the evening ſay, would to God it were morning: And while thou knoweſt not what elſe to do, meditate onely changes inſtead of remedies. Or if thou find no ſuch trouble invading thy mind, let me further ask.

3. Is it *reaſonable* to be ſecure in ſuch a ſtate of uncertainty! Debate this matter a little while, with thy ſelf. Is it thy reaſon, or thy *ſloth* that makes thee ſit ſtill; and forbear to look into thy Spiritual affairs? Is it any *ratio-*

*nal consideration*, or not rather the *meer indisposition* of a Soul, affraid to know its own state, that suspends thee from inquiring? what hast thou to say that looks like a reason? Is it that it will disturbe thy thoughts, interrupt thy pleasures, fill thee with anxious cares and fears, which thou art as loath to admit, as burning coals into thy bosome? Is it that thou canst not endure to look upon so dreadful an object, *at the appearing danger, or possibility of thy being miserable to eternity*? And art thou therefore resolved to shut thine eyes, and cry peace, peace? This is to avoid a present inconvenience by an eternal mischief (a gross overstraining of the Paradox! for avoiding the present fear of Hell, to run into it; as if because a man cannot bear the thoughts of dying, he should presently cut his own throat. Vain man! canst thou not bear the thoughts of eternal misery, how wilt thou bear the thing? And how long-liv'd dost thou think that peace shall be that thou purchasest upon so dear, and hard tearms? canst thou promise thy self an hour? may'st thou not lose thy purchase, and price together the next moment? canst thou *defer* thy misery by *forgetting* it? or will thy judgment linger, and thy damnation slumber, while thou securely lingerest, and slumberest? canst thou wink Hell into nothing; and put it out of *being*, by putting it out of thy *thoughts*? Alas man! open thy eyes, when thou wilt, thou shalt find thou hast not bettered thy case by having kept them fast closed. The bitterness of death is not yet past.

paſt. The horrid image is ſtill before thee. This is not a phanſied evil, which a man may dream himſelf into, and (*eadem operâ*) with as little difficultie, dream himſelf out of it again: no, thy caſe is miſerable and dangerous when thou compoſeſt thy ſelf to ſleep; if thou awakeſt, thou wilt find it ſtill the ſame; onely thou did'ſt not apprehend it before, for then thou wouldeſt not have ſlept. As the Drunkard that kills a man, and after falls aſleep in his drunken fit; he awakes and underſtands his wretched caſe. Would his ſleeping on, till the Officers arreſt had awak't him, have mended the matter with him?

But thou wilt poſſibly ſay, is it not better, here, to have a little quiet now, then to be miſerable by *ſad thoughts here*, and miſerable by *actual ſuffering hereafter* too? Is not one death enough? why ſhould one kill himſelf ſo often over? and haſten miſery as if it came on too ſlowly?

Better, man? an hard choice. Suppoſing thou art to be *eternally* miſerable: If thou underſtand'ſt that *word eternity*; The good or evil of this little inch of time, will ſignifie ſo little with thee, as hardly to weigh any thing in the Scale of a rational judgment. But what, art thou now *dreaming*, while thou thus reaſoneſt? Doſt thou yet no better underſtand thy caſe? Art thou not under the Goſpel? Is it not the day of thy hope, and of the Lords grace, and patience towards thee? It was ſaid that ſleeping would not better thy caſe; but it was not ſaid, that *awaking* would not; but all

that is here said, is designed to the awakening of thee, that thou may'st know thy case, and indeavour a redress. Dost thou think any man in his sober wits, would take all this pains thus to reason with thee, if that were the acknowledged, and agreed state of thy case; that it were already taken for granted thou must perish? We might as well go preach to Devils, and carry down the Gospel into Hell. But dost thou think the holy merciful God sent his Son, and his Ministers to mock men; and to treat with them about their eternal concernments, when there is no hope? Were that thy case, thou hadst as good a pretence as the Devil had, *to complain of being tormented before thy time*; But if thou be not wilfully perverse, in mistaking the matter we are reasoning about, thou may'st understand, Thy reason is here appealed to *in this*; whether having so fair hopes before thee, as the Gospel gives of this blessedness, we are discoursing of; it be not reasonable from the apprehension of *a meer possibility* of miscarrying, (which can only be through thy wilful security, and neglect) to give up thy self to a supine negligence, and indulge that security, which is so sure to ruine thee, and exchange *possible hoped heaven*, for a *certain Hell*; or whether rather it be not reasonable, to stir up thy soul to consider in what posture thou art, towards the attainment of this blessedness; that thou may'st accordingly steer thy course in order to it? If an Accusation, or a Disease do threaten thy life; or a suspected flaw, thy Title, to thy Estate,

Eſtate, would'ſt thou not think it reaſonable to inquire into thy caſe? and is it not much more *deſirable*, in a matter of this conſequence to be at ſome certainty? and *prudent* to indeavour it, if it may poſſibly be attain'd? Whence let me further ask.

Fourthly, *Canſt thou pretend it to be impoſſible?* Hath God left thee under *a neceſſitated ignorance*, in this matter? or denied thee *ſufficient* means of knowing how 'tis with thee in reſpect of thy Spiritual Eſtate? Though he have not given thee *a Liſt*, or told thee the Number, or Names of his Sanctified ones; yet hath he not ſufficiently deſcribed the perſons, and given thee characters by which they may be known? And hath he not furniſh't thee with *a ſelf reflecting power*, by which thou art inabled to look into thy ſelf? and diſcern whether thou be of them or no? Doth he not offer, and afford to ſerious, diligent ſouls, the aſſiſting light of his bleſſed Spirit to guide, and ſucceed the inquirie? And if thou find it difficult, to come to a ſpeedy, clear iſſue, to make a preſent, certain judgment of thy caſe; ought not that to ingage thee to a patient, continued diligence, rather then a raſh, deſpairing madneſs, to deſiſt, and caſt off all? In as much as the difficultie, though great, is not inſuperable, and the neceſſity, and advantage incomparably greater? And (though divers other things do confeſſedly fall in) the principal difficultie lies in thy *averſation*, and *unwillingneſs*. Thou art not put to traverſe the Creation, to climb Heaven, or dig through the

Earth; but thy work lies nigh thee, in thy own heart, and Spirit, and what is ſo nigh, or ſhould be ſo familiar to thee, as thy ſelf? 'Tis but caſting thy eye upon thy own ſoul, to diſcern which way 'tis inclin'd, and bent, thou art urged to. Which is that we propounded next to diſcover. *Viz.*

2. *That we are to judge of the hopefulneſs of our enjoying this bleſſedneſs, by the preſent habitude, or diſpoſedneſs of our ſpirits thereto.* For what is that righteouſneſs which qualifies for it, but the impreſs of the Goſpel upon the minds and hearts of men? The *Goſpel-revelation* is the onely *Rule*, and *Meaſure* of that righteouſneſs. It muſt therefore conſiſt *in conformity thereto.* And look to the frame, and deſign of the Goſpel-revelation; and what doth ſo directly correſpond to it, as that very habitude, and diſpoſedneſs of ſpirit for this bleſſednesſe whereof we ſpeak? Nothing ſo anſwers the Goſpel, as a propenſion of heart towards God (gratifi'd in part, now, and increaſing, till it find a full ſatisfaction) a deſire of knowing him, and of being like him. 'Tis the whole deſign of the Goſpel, which reveals his glory in the face of Jeſus Chriſt, to work and form the ſpirits of men to this. They therefore whoſe ſpirits are thus wrought, and framed, *are righteous* by the *Goſpel-meaſure*, and by *that righteouſneſs are evidently entituled*, and fitted for this bleſſedneſs. Yea that righteouſneſs hath in it (or rather is) the elements, the firſt Principles, the ſeed of this bleſſedneſs. There can therefore be no ſurer *Rule*, or *Mark*, where-

whereby to judge our states, whether we have to do with this blessednes, may expect it yea or no, *than this.*

*How stand we affected towards it, in what disposition are our hearts thereto?* Those fruits of righteousnesse, by which the soul is qualified to appear without offence in the day of Christ; the several graces of the Sanctifying Spirit; are nothing else but so many holy Principles, all disposing the soul towards this blessednesse, and the way to it, *Mortification*, *Self-denial*, and *godly sorrow*, take it off from other objects, the World, Self, and Sin, *Repentance* (-that part of it which respects God) turns the course of its motion towards *God*, the *end*. *Faith* directs it, through Christ the way. *Love* makes it more freely; *desire*, earnestly; *joy*, pleasantly; *hope*, confidently; *humility*, evenly; *fear*, circumspectly; *patience*, constantly, and perseveringly. All conspire to give the Soul aright disposition towards this blessednes. The result of them all is *heavenlinesse*; an *heavenly temper of spirit*. For they all (one way, or other) as so many Lines, and Rayes, have respect to *a blessednes in God* (which is heaven) as the *point*, at which they aim; and (the *cuspis*) the point in which they meet, in order to the touching of that objective point is *heavenlinesse*. This is the *ultimate*, and immediate disposition of heart, for this blessednes; the result (the *terminus productus*) of the whole work of righteousnes, in the Soul; by which 'tis said to be as it were, *gnata ad gloriam*, begotten to the eternal inheritance.

Con-

Concerning this therefore, chiefly inſtitute thy inquiry. Demand of thy ſelf, is my ſoul yet made *heavenly*? bent upon eternal bleſſedneſſe or no? And here thou mayeſt eaſily apprehend of how great concernment it is, to have the right notion of *heaven*; or future bleſſedneſs, as was urged under the *foregoing Rule*. For if thou take for it, another thing; thou miſſeſt thy mark, and art quite beſide thy buſineſs. But if thou retain a right, and ſcriptural ſtate and notion of it; the Rule thou art to judge by, is *ſure*; *They ſhall have heaven whoſe hearts are intent upon it, and framed to it.* Scripture is every where pregnant, and full of this.

The Apoſtle plainly intimates; this will *be the rule of Gods final judgment.* Certainly it cannot be unſafe for us, to judge our ſelves by the ſame Rule. He tells us, when *God ſhall judge every one according to his works* (the great buſineſs of the judgment day) *eternal life*, ſhall be the portion of them, *who, by patient continuance in well doing, ſought glory, and honour, and immortality*, (which are but other expreſſions of the ſame thing) what can be more plain. *They ſhall have eternal life, and glory that ſeek it*; whoſe hearts are towards it. Again, ſpeaking of true Chriſtians, *κατ' ἐπίνοιαν* (*i. e.* in a way of contradiction from Pſeudo-Chriſtians, ſuch, as he ſaith, were enemies of the Croſſe) he gives us (among other) this brand of theſe latter; that they did *mind earthly things*, and tells us their *end would be deſtruction*, but gives us this oppoſite cha-

Rev. 2. 6, 7.

character of the other; *our converſation is in heaven*; our trade and buſineſs, our daily negotiations (as well as the priviledges of our Citizen-ſhip) lie there (as his expreſſion imports) and thence intimates the oppoſite end of *ſuch*; *whence we look for a* [*Saviour*] not *deſtruction*, but *ſalvation*. And in the ſame Context of Scripture where, *they that are riſen with Chriſt, and who ſhall appear with him in glory*, are requir'd *to ſet their* [*mind*] on *things above, not on things on the earth*. That we may underſtand this, not to be *their duty* onely; but their *character*; we are immediately told; they who do not ſo mortifie, not their *earthly members* (thoſe luſts that diſpoſe men towards the earth, and to grovel in the duſt, as the graces of the Spirit diſpoſe them heaven-ward, and to converſe with glory) *are the children of diſobedience, upon whom the wrath of God cometh*. The *Faith*, the juſt live by, is the *ſubſtance of things hoped for*, &c. Such believers, are *confeſſed, avowed ſtrangers on earth*, & ſeekers of the *better*, the *heavenly Country, whence 'tis ſaid, God will not be aſhamed to be called their God*: plainly implying, that as for low, terrene ſpirits; that love to creep on the earth, and imbrace Dunghills, God will be aſhamed of them; he will for ever diſdain a relation to them, *while*, and *as ſuch*. And if we will be determined by the expreſs word of our great Redeemer, to whom we owe all the hopes of this bleſſedneſs. When he had been adviſing not to *lay up treaſure on earth*, but *in heaven*; he preſently adds, *where your treaſure is, there will your hearts*

Phil. 3. 18, 19, 20.

Col. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Heb. 11. 1. 13. -16.

Matth. 5. 19, 20, 21.

*hearts be also.* If thy treasure, thy great interests, thy precious, and most valuable good, be above; that will attract thy heart, it will certainly be disposed thitherward.

Yet here it must carefully be considered; that, in as much as this blessedness is *thy end*, i. e. thy *Supream good* (as the notion of treasure, also imports) Thy heart must be set upon it *above any other injoyment*; else all is to no purpose. 'Tis not a faint, slight, overmastered inclination that will serve the turn; but (as all the forementioned Scriptures import) such as will bespeak it a mans business to seek heaven, his main work; and give ground to say of him, *his heart is there.* If two lovers solicit the same person, and, speaking of them in comparisons she say, *this* hath my heart; is it tolerable to understand her, as meaning him she loves less? so absurd would it be to understand Scriptures, that speak of such an intention of heart heaven-ward; as if the faintest desire, or coldest wish, or most lazie, inconstant indeavour were all they meant. No, 'tis a steady prevalent, victorious direction of heart towards the future glory, in comparison whereof, thou despisest all things else (all temporal, terrene things) that must be the (*evidential*) ground of thy hope to enjoy it. And therefore in this, deal faithfully with thy own soul, and demand of it; Dost thou esteem this blessedness above all things else? Do the thoughts of it continually return upon thee? and thy mind and heart, as it were *naturally*, run out to it? Are thy chiefest soliçitudes, and cares

cares taken up about it, leaſt thou ſhould'ſt fall ſhort, and ſuffer a diſappointment? Doſt thou favour it with pleaſure? hath it a ſweet and grateful reliſh to thy Soul? doſt thou bend all thy powers to purſue, and preſſe on towards it? Urge thy ſelf to give anſwer *truly* to ſuch enquiries; and to conſider them *ſeriouſly*, that thou may'ſt do ſo.

Such whoſe Spirits are either *moſt highly raiſed, and lift up to heaven, or moſt deeply depreſt, and ſunk into the earth*, may make the cleareſt judgment of themſelves. With them that are of a middle temper, the trial will be more difficult; yet, not fruitleſs, if it be managed with ſerious diligence; though no certain concluſion or judgment be made thereupon.

For the *true deſign*, and uſe of all ſuch enquiries, and reflections upon our ſelves (which let it be duly conſidered) is, *not to bring us into a ſtate of ceſſation from further indeavours*; as if we had nothing more to do, (ſuppoſe we judge the beſt of our ſtate that can be thought) but to *keep us in a wakeful temper of Spirit*; that we may not forget our ſelves in the great buſineſs we have yet before us; but go on with renewed vigour, through the whole courſe of renewed indeavours, wherein we are to be ſtill converſant, till we have attained our utmoſt mark, and end. Therefore is this preſent enquiry directed, as introductive to the further duty, that, in the following Rules, is yet to be recommended.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XVII.

Rule 3d. *Directing such as upon enquirie find, or see cause to suspect a total aversation in themselves to this blessednesse, to be speedy, and restlesse in their indeavours, to have the temper of their Spirits altered, and made suitable to it. Doubts and Objections conconcerning the use of such indeavours, in such a case, answered. Some Considerations to enforce this Direction propounded and pressed.*

*Rule.* 3. 3. *THat if, upon such reflection, we find, or suspect our selves, wholly disaffected, and unsuitable to this blessedness, we apply our selves to speedy, incessant indeavours to get the temper of our Spirits changed, and fitted thereto.*

The state of the case speaks it self, that there is no sitting still here. This is no condition, (Soul) to be rested in; unless thou art provided to encounter the terrours of eternal darkness, and endure the torture of everlasting burnings. Yet am I not unapprehensive how great a difficulty a carnal heart will make of it, to bestir itself in order to any redresse of so deplorable a case. And how real a difficulty it is to say any thing, that will be thought regardable to such a one. Our sad experience

perience tells us, that our moſt efficacious words are commonly wont to be entertained, as neglected puffs of wind; our moſt convictive reaſonings, and perſwaſive exhortations loſt (yea, and though *they* are managed too in the name of the great God) as upon the deaf, and dead. Which is too often apt to tempt into that reſolution, *of ſpeaking no more in that name.* And were it not that the dread of that great Majeſty retains us; how hard were it to forbear ſuch expoſtulations; "Lord, why are we commonly ſent upon "ſo vain an errand? Why are we required to "ſpeak to them that will not hear? and expoſe thy ſacred truths and counſels, to the "contempt of ſinful worms? to labour day by "day in vain, and ſpend our ſtrength for "nought. Yea; we cannot forbear to complain. "None ſo labour in vain as "we. Of all men, none ſo generally, im"proſperous, and unſucceſsful. Others are "wont to ſee the fruit of their labours, in pro"portion to the expence of ſtrength in them. "But our ſtrength is labour, and ſorrow, (for "the moſt part) without the return of a joy"full fruit. The Husbandman ploughs in "hope, and ſowes in hope, and is, commonly, "partaker of his hope: we are ſent to plough, "and ſow among Rocks, and Thorns, and in "the high Way: how ſeldom fall we upon "good ground! where we have any increaſe. "Yea Lord! how often are men the harder "for all our labours with them, the deader "for all indeavours to quicken them. Our

"breath

"breath kills them, whom thou sendest us to
"speak life to, and we often become to them
"a *deadly savour*. Sometime, when we think
"somewhat is done to purpose, our labour,
"all returns, and we are to begin again; and
"when the duties we perswade to come di-
"rectly to cross mens interests, and carnal in-
"clinations, they revolt and start back, as if
"we were urging them upon flames, or the
"swords point, and their own souls, and the
"eternal glory are regarded as a thing of
"naught. Then Heaven and Hell become
"with them Phancies and Dreams, and all
"that we have said to them false and fabulous.
"We are to the most, *as men that mock*, in
"our most serious warnings, and counsels, and
"the *word of the Lord is a reproach*. We some-
"times fill our mouthes with Arguments, and
"our hearts with Hope, and think, sure, they
"will now yield, but they esteem our strong-
"est reasonings (as *Leviathan* doth Iron, and
"Brass) but as *Straw*, and *rotten Wood*, and
"laugh at Divine threatnings; as he doth at the
"shaking of the Spear. Yea, and when we
"have convinc't them, yet we have done no-
"thing; though we have got their *Judge-*
"*ments and Consciences* on our side, and their
"own; their *Lusts*, onely, reluctate,
"and carry all. They will *now* have their
"way, though they perish. We see them
"perishing under our very eye, and we cry to
"them (in thy name, O Lord) to turn, and live,
"but they regard us not. For these things some-
"times *we weep in secret*, and our eyes trickle
down

"down with tears, yea we cry to thee, O Lord!
"and thou heareſt us not; thy hand ſeems
"ſhortened, that it cannot ſave; it puts not on
"ſtrength as in the days of old. It hath ſnatcht
"ſouls by thouſands, as firebrands out of the
"fire, but now thou hideſt and draweſt it back.
"Who hath believed our report, to whom is
"the Arm of the Lord revealed. Mean while
"even the Divels inſtruments proſper more
"than we. And he that makes it his buſineſs to
"tempt, and intice down ſouls to hell, ſuc-
"ceeds more then we that would allure them
"to heaven.

But we muſt ſpeak, whether men will hear, or forbear, though it concerns us to do it with fear and trembling. Oh how ſolemn a buſineſs is it to treat with ſouls! and how much to be dreaded leaſt they miſcarry through our imprudence, or neglect! I write with ſollicitude what ſhall beome of theſe lines; with what effect they will be read (if they fall into ſuch hands) by them, whom they moſt concern; Yea, and with ſome doubt, whether it were beſt to write on, or forbear. Sometimes one would incline to think it, a merciful omiſſion: leſt we adde to the account, and torment of many at laſt, but *ſenſe of duty towards all*; and *hope of doing good to ſome* muſt overſway. Conſidering therefore the ſtate of ſuch ſouls I am now dealing with, I apprehend there may be obſtructions to the entertainment of the counſell here recommended, of two ſorts; *partly in their minds, partly in their hearts*, ſomething of *appearing reaſon*; but more of *real perverſe*

*will.* That which I shall do in persuance of it, will fall under two answerable heads,

1. A reply to certain doubts and objections wherein to meet with the former.
2. The proposal of some considerations, wherein to contend against the latter.

*As to the first,* It appears men are grown *ingeniously wicked*; and have learned how to *dispute* themselves into hell; and to neglect what concerns their eternal blessedness, *with some colour, and pretence of reason.* It will therefore be worth the while to discusse a little their more specious pretences; and consider their more obvious (supposeable) scruples, which will be found to concern, either the *possibility, lawfulness, advantage,* or *necessity* of the endeavours we perswade to.

Doubt. 1. *Is it a possible undertaking you put us upon? or is there any thing we can do in order to the change of our own hearts? We find our selves altogether, undesirous of those things wherein you state blessedness, and they are without savour to us. If therefore this notion you give us of blessedness be right, all the work necessary to qualifie us for it, is yet to be done; we yet remain wholly destitute of any principle of life, that may dispose us to such relishes and injoyments. If the new Creature, (as you say) consist in a suitable temper of Spirit unto such a state as this, 'tis as yet wholly unformed in us. And is there any thing to be done by a dead man in order to life? Can a Child contribute any thing to its first formation? or a Creature to its coming into being?*

*Reply.* If you were serious in what you say; methinks you should have little mind to play the Sophisters

sters, and put fallacies upon yourselves in a matter that concerns the life of your souls. And what else are you now doing? For sure, otherwise one would think it were no such difficulty to understood the difference between (the *esse simpliciter*) the *meer being of anything*, and (the *esse tale*) *its being such, or such by the addition of somewhat afterward to that being*, Though nothing could contribute to its *one being simply*. Yet sure, when *it is in being*, it may contribute to the bettering, or perfecting of it self (as even the unreasonable creatures themselves do) And if it be a creature *naturally capable of acting with design*, It may act designedly in order to its becoming so or so qualified, or the attaining of somewhat yet wanting to its perfection. You cannot be thought so ignorant, but that you know the *new Creature* is onely an *additional* to your *former being*. And though it be true, that *it* can do no more to its own production, than the unconceived Child (as nothing can act before it is) doth it therefore follow, that *your reasonable soul*, in which it is to be formed, cannot use Gods prescribed means in order to that blessed change? You cannot act *holily*, as a Saint; but therefore can you not act *rationally*, as a man! I appeal to your reason and conscience in some particulars.

Is it *impossible* to you to attend upon the dispensation of that Gospel, which is *Gods power unto salvation*? the seal by which he impresses his image, the glass through which his glory shines to the changing of soules into the same likeness, are you not as able to go to Church,

as to the Tavern; and to sit in the assembly of *Saints*, as of *Mockers*?

Is it *Impossible* to you to consult the written word of God, and thence learn what you must be and do in order to blessedness? will not your eyes serve you to read the Bible as well as a Gazett or Play-book?

Is it impossible to inquire of your Minister, or an understanding Christian neighbour concerning the *way* and *terms* of blessednesse? Cannot your tongue pronounce these words, *what shall I do to be saved?* as well as those, *pray what do you think of the weather?* or what news is there going? Yet further,

Is it impossibly to *apply your thoughts* to what you meet with suitable to your case, in your attendance upon preaching, reading, or discourse? Have all such words a barbarous sound, in your ear, can you not consider what *sense* is carried under them? What they import and signify? can you not bethink yourself: do the doctrines of *God*, and *Christ*, and the *life to come*, signifie something or nothing? or do they signifie any thing worth the considering, or that tis fit for me to take notice of?

And yet to proceed a little further with you, I pray you once more demand of yourselves, and put your consciences closely to it; whether, when they have told you (as no doubt they will) that such things deserve your consideration, it be impossible to you, to use your *considering power* that, and imploy it even about these things. Do but make this easie tryal, and then say, whether it be impossible; See if you can-

cannot select one hour on purpose, wherein to sit down by yourselves alone, with this resolution. *Well, I will now spend this hour in considering my eternal concernments.* When you have obtained so much of your self: set your thoughts to work (you will find them voluble and unfixt, very apt to revolt, and fly off from things you have no mind to) but use your authority with your self. Tell your soul (or let it tell it self) *these things concern thy life.* At least, taking this prepared matter along with thee (that thou mayst not have this pretence thou knowest not what to think of) try if thou canst not think of these things, now actually suggested, and offered to thy thoughts; as namely,

Consider, that thou hast a reasonable immortal soul, which, as it is *liable to eternal misery*, so it is *capable of eternal blessedness.*

That this blessedness thou dost understand to consist *onely in the vision of the blessed God*, in *being made like to him*, and in the *satisfaction* that is thence to result and accrue to thee.

Consider (what thy very objection supposeth) that thou findest the temper of thy Spirit to be altogether indisposed, and averse to such a blessedness. Is it not so? is not this thy very case? feel now again thy heart, try is it not at least coldly affected towards this blessed state?

Is it not then obvious to thee to consider that the temper of thy Spirit must be changed, or thou art undone? That, inasmuch as thy blessedness lyes in God, this change must ly in the alteration of thy dispositions and the po-

ſture of thy Spirit towards him. Further,

Canſt thou not conſider the power, and fixedneſs of thy averſation from God? and with how mighty a weight thy heart is carried, and held down from him? Try, lift at thy heart, ſee if it will be raiſed God-ward, and Heaven-ward? doſt thou not find it is as if thou wert lifting at a Mountain, that it lies as a dead weight, and ſtirs not? ponder thy caſe in this reſpect. And then,

Is it not to be conſidered, that thy time is paſſing away apace? that if thou let thy ſelf alone, 'tis likely to be as bad with thee *to morrow*, as *this day*, and as bad *next day*, as *to morrow*? And if thy time expire, and thou be ſnatcht away in this ſtate, what will become of thee? And doſt thou not therefore, ſee a neceſſity of conſidering what ever may be moſt moving, and moſt likely to incline thy heart God-ward, of pleading yet more lowdly, and importunately with thy ſelf?

And canſt thou not conſider, and reaſon the matter thus? "O my ſoul, what's the reaſon "that thou ſo draweſt back, and hangeſt off "from thy God? that thou art ſo unwilling to "be *bleſſed in him*? that thou ſhouldeſt ven- "ture to run thy ſelf upon eternal perdition "rather? what cauſe hath he ever given thee "to diſaffect him? what is the ground of thy "ſo mighty prejudice? Hath he ever done "thee hurt? Doſt thou think he will not accept "a returning ſoul? that is to give the lie to his "Goſpel, and it becomes not a periſhing "wretch ſo to provoke him in whom is all

"its

"its hope. Is the eternal glory an unde-
"sirable thing? or the everlasting burnings
"tolerable? canst thou find a way of being for
"ever blessed *without God*, or whether he will
"or no? or is there a sufficient, present plea-
"sure in thy sinful distance from God, to out-
"weigh Heaven and Hell? Darest thou ven-
"ture upon a resolution of giving God and
"Christ their last refusal? or say, thou wilt
"never hearken to, or have to do with them
"more? or darest thou venture to do, what
"thou darest not resolve? and act the wicked-
"ness thou canst not think of? scorn eternal
"Majestie and love? spurn and trample a
"bleeding Saviour.

Commune thus awhile with thy self, but if yet thou find thy heart relent nothing. Thou canst yet further consider, that it lies not in thy power to turn thy own heart (or else how comest thou thus to object?) And hence,

Canst thou avoid considering, *this is a distressed case?* that thou art in great straits; liable to perish (yea sure to do so, if thou continue in that ill temper of Spirit) and wholly unable to help thy self. Surely thou canst not but see this to be a most distressed case.

I put it now to thy conscience; whether, being thus led on, thou canst not go thus far. See whether upon trial, thy Conscience give thee leave to say; *I am not able thus to do, or think*: and be not here so *foolish*, as to separate the action of the *first cause*, and the *second*, in judging thy *ability*: Thou may'st say no, I cannot think a good thought *without*

*God*; true, so I know thou canst not move thy finger without God; but my meaning in this appeal to thy Conscience, is, whether upon trial, thou findest not an *assistance sufficiens* to carry thee thus far?

Possibly thou wilt say yea; but what am I the better: I am onely brought to see my self in a distressed, perishing condition, and can get no further.

I answer,' tis well thou art got so far; if thou do indeed see thy self perishing, and thy drowsie soul awake, into any sense of the sadness of thy case. But I intend not thus to leave thee here. Therefore let me, furthermore, demand of me. What course would'st thou take in any other distress, wherein thou knowest not what to do to help thy self? would not such an exigencie, when thou findest thy self pinch't, and urg'd on every side, and every way is shut up to thee, that thou art beset with calamities, and canst no way turn thy self to avoid them; would not such an exigencie force thee down on thy knees? and set thee a crying to the God of mercy for relief and help? would not *Nature* it self prompt to this. Is it not *Natural* to lift up Hands, and Eyes to Heaven, when we know not what to do?

*Quis vel ipse rum ad cœlum manus tendat nisi aliud quam Deum dicat, vulgi ille naturalis est sermo.* Min. Fel. Oct. p.

Therefore having thus far reasoned with thee about thy *considering power*. Let me demand of thee, if thou canst not yet go somewhat further then *considering*? that is, in short,

Is it impossible to thee to *obey this dictate of nature*?

nature? I mean, repreſent the deplorable caſe of thy ſoul before him that made it? and crave his merciful relief? Do not diſpute the matter, thou canſt not but ſee this is a *poſſible*, and a *rational* courſe as thy caſe is. *Should not a people ſeek unto their God?* Fall down therefore low before him, proſtrate thy ſelf at the foot-ſtool of his mercy-ſeat. Tell him thou underſtandeſt him to be the *Father of Spirits*, and the *Father of Mercies*, that thou haſt heard of his great mercy, and pitty towards the ſpirits of men, in their forlorn lapſed ſtate. What a bleſſedneſs he hath deſigned for them, what means he hath deſigned to bring them to it. Tell him thou only needeſt a temper of Spirit, ſuitable to this bleſſedneſs he invites thee to. That thou can'ſt not maſter, and change thy ſenſual, earthly heart, thou know'ſt he eaſily can; thou art come to implore his help, that his bleſſed, and holy Spirit may deſcend, and breath upon thy ſtupid, dead Soul; and may ſweetly encline, and *move* it towards him, that it may eternally *reſt* in him; and that thou may'ſt not periſh, after ſo much done, in order to thy bleſſedneſs; 'onely for want of a heart to entertain it. Tell him thou com'ſt upon his gracious encouragement, having heard he is as ready to give his Spirit, *to them that ask him*, as Parents bread to their craving Children, rather then a ſtone. That 'tis for life thou beggeſt. That 'tis not ſo eaſie to thee to think of periſhing for ever, that thou canſt not deſiſt, and give up all thy hopes; that thou ſhalt be in Hell ſhortly, if he hear and help thee not.

Laſtly,

Lastly, If thus thou obtain any communication of that holy blessed Spirit, and thou find it gently moving thy dead heart, let me once more demand of thee; Is it impossible to forbear this or that external act of sin *at this time*, when thou art tempted to it, sure thou can'st not say, *'tis impossible.* What necessitates thee to it? and then certainly thou may'st as well, ordinarily, with-hold thy self from running into such customary sensualities, as tend to grieve the Spirit, debauch Conscience, stupifie thy Soul, and hide God from thee.

And if thou canst do all this, do not fool thy slothful soul with as idle a conceit, that thou hast nothing to do, but to sit still, expecting till thou drop into **Hell.**

*Doubt* 2. 2. *But have I not reason to fear I shall but add sin to sin, in all this? and so increase the burden of guilt upon my own soul, and by endeavouring to better my case, make it far worse.*

*Two things I consider, that suggest to me this fear.* The { *Manner*, *End*, *of the duties you put me upon, as they will be done by me in the case wherein I apprehend my self yet to lie.*

1. *Manner.* (*As to the positive actions you advise to*) *I have heard the best actions of an unregenerate person, are sins through the sinfulness of their manner of doing them, though as to matter of the thing done, they be injoyned, and good. And though it be true, that the regenerate cannot perform a sinless duty, neither yet their person, and works being covered over with the righteous-*

*ness*

*nes of Christ, or look upon as having no sin in them, which I apprehend to be none of my case.*

2. *End.* You put me upon these things in order to the attaining of blessedness: and to do such things with intention to a reward, is to be (as may be doubted) unwarrantably, unnecessary, and sinfully.

*Reply.*

1. First, as to this *former reason* of your doubt, methinks the proposal of it answers it. For as much as you acknowledge the matter of these actions to be good, and duty (and plain it is they are *Moral duties*, of common, perpetual concernment to all *persons*, and *times*) dare you decline, or dispute against your *duty*.

Sure, if we compare the evil of what is *so substantially in itself*, and *what is so circumstantially*, onely by the adherence of some *undue modus*, or manner; it cannot be hard to determine which is the *greater*, and *more dreadful evil*. As to the present case, shouldst thou, when the great God sends abroad his Proclamation of pardon and peace, refuse to attend it; to consider the contents of it, and thy own case in reference thereto; and thereupon to sue to him for the life of thy own soul. Dost thou not plainly see thy refusal must needs be more provoking then thy defective performance. *This* speaks *disability*, but that *rebellion*, and *contempt* *. Besides, dost thou not see that thy objection lies as much against every other action of thy life; the wise man tells us, *the ploughing of the wicked is sin*, (if that be literally to be understood.) And what

* Therefore as to that form of expression [that such acts of unregenerate men are sins] that is a Catechrestical piece of Rhetorick which being so understood, is harmless, but to use it in property of speech, and thence to go about to make men believe that it's a sin to do their duty, is void both of truth & sense, and full of danger unto the souls of men. Prov. 21. 4.

what would'st thou therefore sit still and do nothing? Then how soon would that *Idleness* draw on gross wickedness? and would not that be a dreadful confutation of thy self, if thou who didst pretend a scruple, that thou might-est not pray, read, hear, meditate, shalt not scruple to play the glutton, the drunkard, the wanton, and indulge thy self in all riot, and excess. Yea, if thou do not break out into such exorbitances, would any one think him serious, that should say it were against his Conscience to be *working out his salvation, and striving to enter in at the strait gate. Seeking first the Kingdom of God, &c.* would not this sound strangely? and especially that, in the mean time, it should never be against his Conscience, to trifle away his time, and live in perpetual neglects of God, in persevering Atheism, Infidelity, Hardness of heart, never regretted or striving against; as if these were more innocent?

And what thou say'st of the different case of the *regenerate*, is impertinent; for as to this matter, the case is not different, they that takes themselves to be *such*, must not think that by their supposed interests in the righteousness of Christ, their *real sins* cease to be *such*, they only become *pardoned sins*; and shall they therefore sin more boldly then other men, because they are surer of pardon?

Secondly, *As to the other Ground of this Doubt*, there can onely be a fear of sinning, upon this account, to them, that make more sins and duties then God hath made. The doubt

doubt supposes *Religion* inconsistent with *Humanity*, and that God were about to raze out of the nature of man, one of the most radical, and fundamental Laws written there, *A desire of blessedness*. And supposes it, against the expresse scope, and tenour of his whole Gospel-revelation. For what doth that design, but to bring men to blessedness? and how is it a means to compass that design, but as it tends to ingage mens spirits to design it too? unless we would imagine they should go to heaven blindfold; or be roll'd thither as stones, that know not whether they are mov'd; in which case the Gospel, that reveals the eternal glory, and the way to it, were an useless thing. If so express words had not been in the Bible, as that *Moses had respect to the recompence of reward; yea, that our Lord Jesus himself for the joy set before him, indured the Cross, &c.* this had been a little more colourable, or more modest.

And what, do not all men in all the ordinary actions of their lives act, allowable enough, with intuition to much lower ends? even those *particular ends*, which the works of their several callings tend to, else they should act as bruites in every thing they do. And would such a one scruple, if he were pining for want of bread, to beg, or labour for it, *for this end, to be relieved*. 'Tis the mistaking of the notion of *Heaven*, that hath also an ingrediency into this doubt (if it be really a doubt) what is it a low thing to be *filled with the Divine fulness*? to have his *Glory replenishing our souls*? to

to be perfectly freed from sin? in every thing conformed unto this holy nature and will? That our minding our interest in this, or any affairs, should be the principal thing with us, is not to be thought; our Supreme end must be the same with his, who made all things for himself, *of whom, through whom, and to whom all things are*, that he alone might have the glory. But subordinates need not quarrel. A lower end doth not *exclude*, the higher but *serves* it; and is, as to it, a means. God is our end, as he is to *glorified, and enjoyed by us*: our glorifying him is but the *agnition of his glory*; which we do most in *beholding*, and *partaking it*; which is therefore in direct subordination thereto.

*Doubt.* 3. 3. But it may further be doubted, *what if it be acknowledged that these are both things possible and lawful; yet to what purpose will it be to attempt any thing in this kind? O! what assurance have I of success? is there any word of promise for the encouragement of one in my case? or is God under any obligation to reward the endeavours of nature with special grace? wherefore, when I have done all I can, he may withhold his influence, and then I am but where I were, and may perish notwithstanding.*

*Reply.* And suppose thou perish notwithstanding. Do but yet consult a little with thy own thoughts, which is more tolerable and easie to them to perish, *as not attaining what thy fainter struglings could not reach*; or for the *most direct, wilful rebellion*; *doing wickedly as thou couldest?* Or who shall have, thinkest thou, the

the more fearful condemnation. He that shall truely say when his Master comes to judgment; "I never had indeed (Lord) an heart so fully "changed, and turned to thee, as should de- "note me to be the subject of thy saving, par- "doning mercy; but thou knowest (who "knowest all things) I long (and with some "earnestness) did endeavour it. Thou hast "been privy to my secret desires, and moanes, "to the weak strivings of a listless, distempered "spirit, not pleased with it self; aiming at a "better temper towards thee. I neglected "not thy prescribed means, onely that grace "which I could not challenge thou wast plea- "sed not to give: thou didst require what I must "confess my self to have owed thee; thou did'st "with-hold onely what thou owedst me not: "therefore must I yield my self a convicted "guilty wretch, and have nothing to say why "thy sentence should not pass. Or he that "shall as truely hear from the mouth of his "Judge: *Sinner*, thou wast often forewarned "of this approaching day, and call'd upon "to provide for it. *Thou hadst Precept, upon "Precept, and Line, upon Line.* The counsels "of life, and peace were, with frequent impor- "tunity prest upon thee, but thou rejectedst "all with proud contempt, did'st despise, "with the same profane scorn, the offers, com- "mands, and threats of him that made thee; "hardenest thy heart to the most obstinate re- "bellion against his known Laws, did'st all the "wickedness to which thy heart prompted "thee, without restraint, declinedst every

"thing

"thing of duty which his Authority, and the
"exigency of thy own case did oblige thee to
"did'st avoid, as much as thou couldest, t
"hear or know any thing of my will, could
"not find one serious considering hour in
"whole life time, to bethink thy self wh
"was likely to become of thee, when thy plac
"on earth should know thee no more. Tho
"might'st know thou wast at my mercy, th
"breath in my hand, and that I could easily
"have cut thee off, any moment of that large
"space of time, my patience allow'd thee in
"the world. Yet thou never thought'st it
"worthy the while to sue to me for thy life.
"Destruction from the Lord was never a ter-
"rour to thee. Thou would'st never be
"brought upon thy knees, I had none of thy
"addresses, never didst thou sigh out a serious
"request for mercy: Thy soul was not worth so
"much in thy account. Thy blood, wretch be
"upon thy guilty head; *Depart accursed into*
"*everlasting flames*, &c.

Come now, use thy reason a while; imploy a few sober thoughts about this matter; remember, thou wilt have a long eternitie, wherein to recognize the passages of thy life, and the state of thy case in the last judgement. Were it supposeable, that one who had done as the former, should be left finally destitute of Divine Grace, and perish. Yet, in which of these cases would'st thou chuse to be found at last?

But why yet should'st thou imagine so sad an issue as that after thine utmost endeavours,

grace

grace should be with-held, and leave thee to perish; *because God hath not bound himself by promise to thee?* what promise have the Ravens to be heard when they cry? *But thou art a sinner.* True, otherwise thou wert not without promise; the promises of the first Covenant would, at least, belong to thee. Yet experience tells the world his *unpromised mercies* freely flow every where; *The whole earth is full of his goodness*; yea, *but his special grace is convey'd by promise onely; and that onely through Christ; and how can it be communicated* [*through him*] *to any but those that are in him?* What then is the *first inbeing in Christ no special grace?* or is there any *being in him* before the *first*, that should be the ground of that *gracious communication?* things are plain enough, if we make them not intricate, or intangle our selves by foolish subtilties. God promises sinners indefinitely pardon, and eternal life for the sake of Christ, on condition that they believe on him. He gives of his good pleasure that grace whereby he draws any to Christ, without promise *directly made to them*, whether *absolute*, or *conditional*; though he give it for the sake of Christ also. His discovery of his purpose to give such grace to some, indifinitely, amounts not to a promise *claimable by any*, for if it be said to be an *absolute promise, to particular persons*, who are they? whose duty is it to believe it made to him? If *conditional*, what are the conditions upon which the first grace is *certainly* promised? who can be able to assign them?

But poor soul! thou need'st not stay to puzzle

thy ſelf about this matter. *God binds himſelf to do what he promiſes; but hath he any where bound himſelf to do no more?* Did he promiſe thee thy being; or that thou ſhould'ſt live to this day? did he promiſe thee the bread that ſuſtains thee, the daily comforts of thy life? Yea, (what is nearer the preſent purpoſe) did he promiſe thee a ſtation under the Goſpel? or that thou ſhould'ſt ever hear the name of Chriſt? if ever his Spirit have in any degree mov'd upon thy heart, inclin'd thee at all ſeriouſly to conſider thy eternal concernments, did he beforehand make thee any promiſe of that?

A promiſe would give thee a *full certainty of the iſſue*, if it were *abſolute* out of hand? if *conditional*, aſſoon as thou findeſt the condition performed. But what, canſt thou act upon no lower rate then a *foregoing certainty*, a *preaſſurance of the event*?

My friend, *conſider* a little, (what thou canſt not but *know already*) that 'tis HOPE (built with thoſe that are rational, upon rational probabilities, with many, oftentimes, upon none at all) is the great Engine that moves the World, that keeps all ſorts of men in action. Doth the Husbandman *foreknow* when he Ploughs, and Sows; that the Crop will anſwer his coſt, and pains. Doth the Merchant *foreknow*, when he Imbarques his goods, he ſhall have a ſafe, and gainful return? Doſt thou *foreknow*, when thou eateſt, it ſhall refreſh thee? when thou takeſt Phyſick, that it ſhall recover thy health? and ſave thy life? Yea further, can the *ve-*

*ver-*

*thus* man pretend a promiſe, that his unjuſt practiſes ſhall *inrich* him? the *malicious*, that he ſhall proſper in his deſign of *revenge*? the *ambitious*, that he ſhall be *great and honourable*? the *voluptuous*, *that his pleaſures ſhall be always amixt with gall, and wormwood*? Can any ſay, they ever had a promiſe to aſcertain them that profaneneſs and ſenſuality would bring them to Heaven? that an ungodly diſſolute life would end in bleſſedneſs? Here the Lord knows men can be confident, and active enough without a promiſe, and againſt many an expreſſe threatning. Wilt thou not upon the hope thou haſt before thee, do as much for thy ſoul, for eternal bleſſedneſs, as men do for uncertain riches, ſhort pleaſures, an airie ſoon-blaſted name? yea as much as men deſperately do to damn themſelves, and purchaſe their own ſwift deſtruction.

Or canſt thou pretend, though thou haſt no preaſſuming promiſe, thou haſt no hope? Is it nothing to have heard ſo much of Gods gracious Nature? Is it ſuitable to the reports, and diſcoveries he hath made of himſelf, to let a poor wretch periſh at his feet, that lies proſtrate there expecting his mercy? Did'ſt thou ever hear he was ſo little a lover of ſouls? Do his giving his Son, his earneſt, unwearied ſtrivings with ſinners, his long patience, the clear beams of Goſpel-light, the amiable appearances of his Grace, give ground for no better, no kinder thoughts of him? yea, hath he not expreſly ſtiled himſelf *the God hearing prayers*, taken a name on purpoſe to en-

courage *all flesh to come to him.* Wilt thou dare then to adopt those profane words, *what profit is it to pray to him?* and say, 'tis better sit still, resolving to perish, then address to him, or seek his favour, because he hath not by promise assured thee of the issue, and that, if he suspends his grace, all thou dost, will be in vain?

Psal. 65. 2. Job 21. 15.

"How would'st thou judge of the like reso-
"lution? If the Husbandman should say,
"when I have spent my pains, and cost in
"breaking up, and preparing the Earth, and
"casting in my Seed; if the Sun shine not,
"and the rain fall not in season; if the influ-
"ences of Heaven be suspended, if God with-
"hold his blessing: or if an evading enemy
"anticipate my Harvest; all I do, and expend,
"is to no purpose: and God hath not ascertain'd
"me of the contrarie, by expresse promise;
"'tis as good therefore sit still. Censure, and
"answer him, and thy self both together.

4. Doubt. *But thou wilt yet, it may be, say, that though all this may be possibly true; yet thou canst not, all this while, be convinc't of any need, so earnestly to busie thy self about this affair. For God is wont to surprise souls by preventing acts of Grace, to be found of them that sought him not, to break in by an irresistible power, which he least thought of. And to go about to anticipate his grace, were to detract from the freeness, and so from the glory of it.*

Reply. But art thou not in all this afraid of charging God foolishly? When the merciful God, in compassion to the souls of men, hath given his Gospel:

Goſpel, conſtituted, and ſettled a ſtanding Office to be perpetuated through all ages for the publication of it; Invited the world therein to a treaty with him, touching the concernments of their eternal peace; required ſo ſtrictly their attendance to, and moſt ſerious conſideration of his propoſals, and offers; encouraged, and commanded their addreſſes to him, ſet up a Throne of Grace on purpoſe, wilt thou dare to ſay all this is needleſs?

When God ſpeaks to thee, is it *needleſs* for thee to hear him? or regard what he ſaith? or when he commannds thee to pour forth thy ſoul to him, wilt thou ſay, *'tis a needleſſe thing?*

Doſt thou not plainly ſee, that the peculiar, appropriate aptitude of the things preſt upon thee, ſpeaks them *neceſſary* as *means* to their deſigned end; whence alſo they are fitly called, *means of Grace?* Is not the Word of God the *Immortal Seed? are not Souls begotten by that Word to be the firſt fruits of his creatures?* Is it not the Type, the Mould, or Print, by which Divine Impreſſions are put upon the Soul. *The inſtrument by which he ſanctifies.* Are not the exceeding great and precious promiſes the *Vehicula*, the conveighances *of the Divine Nature.* And what can be the means to mollifie, and melt the obdurate heart of a ſinner, to aſſwage its enmity, to overcome it into the love of God, to transform it into his image, but the Goſpel-diſcovery of Gods own gracious, and holy nature? and can it operate to this purpoſe, without being heard, or read, and underſtood

*Neceſſitat mediі.*

1 Pet. 1. 23.
Jam. 1. 18.
Rom. 6. 17.
Joh. 17. 17.

2 Pet. 1.

stood, and considered, and taken to heart? Do but compare this means God works by, with the *Subject* to be wrought upon, and the *Effect* to be wrought, and nothing can be conceived more *adequate*, and *fitly corresponding*.

But in as much as there hath been an enmity between God and sinners, and that therefore the *whole entire means of reconciliation* must be a *Treaty*. And that a Treaty cannot be managed, or conceived without *mutual interlocution*; therefore must the sinner have a way of expressing its own sense to God; as well as he speaks his mind to it; which shews the necessity of *Prayer too*; and therefore, because the *Peace* begins on his part (though the War began on ours) he *calls* upon sinners to open themselves to him; *Come now, let us reason together*, Isa. 1 Chap. 55. he invites and addresses; *Seek the Lord, while he may be found, and call upon him, while he is nigh, &c.* And doth not the natural relation it self betwen the *Creator* and a *Creature*, require this besides the exigencie of our present case? Every Creature is a *supplicant*; Its *necessary dependence*, is a *natural Prayer*. *The eyes of all things look up, &c.* 'Tis the proper glory of a Deity to be depended on, and addrest to. *Should not a people seek unto their God?* Isa. 8. 19. 'tis an appeal to reason, is it not a congruous thing!

*Necessitas precepti.* Further, dost thou not know thy Makers will *made known*, infers upon thee a *necessitie* of obeying; unless thou think the *breach* between God and thee, is better to be healed by

by *Rebellion*: And that the onely way to expiate wickednesse, were to continue, and multiply them. Is it a needlesse thing to comply with the will of him that gave thee breath and being? and whose power is so absolute over thee, as to all thy concernments, both of time, and eternity?

Again, while thou pretendest these things are needlesse; come now, speak out freely; what are the more necessary affairs wherein thou art so deeply ingaged, that thou can'st not suffer a diversion? what is the service, and gratification of thy flesh and sense so important a businesse? that thou can'st be at no leasure for that *more needlesse* work of *saving thy soul*? where is thy reason and thy modesty? Dost thou mind none other from day to day, but *necessary affairs*? Dost thou use when thou art tempted to vain dalliances, empty discourses, intemperate indulgence to thy appetite, so to answer the temptation. *It is not necessary*? or art thou so destitute of all Conscience, and shame, to think it *unnecessary* to work out thy salvation, to *strive to enter in at the strait gate that leads to life*? but most indispensably necessary to be very critically curious, about what thou shalt eat, and drink, and put on; and how to spend thy time with greatest ease and pleasure to thy flesh, that it may not have the least cause to complain it is neglected?

Thy pretence, *That God is wont to be found of them that sought him not*; to the purpose thou intendest it, is a most ignorant, or malicious abuse of Scripture. The Prophet is in that Isa. 65. 1.

Text foretelling the calling of the *Gentiles*; who, while they remained such, did not ('tis true) enquire after God, but then he expressly first tells us (personating God) *I am sought of them that asked not for me* (that is after the Gospel came among them) and then 'tis added *I am found* (*upon this seeking*, plainly) *of him that sought me not* (i. e. who once in their former darkness, before I revealed my self in the *Gospel-dispensation*, to them that sought me not) q. d. I am *now* sought of a people, that *lately* sought me not, nor asked after me, and I am found of them. But whats this to thy case? whom God hath been in Gospel earnestly inviting to seek after him, and thou all this while refusest to comply with the invitation?

And suppose thou hear of some rare instances of persons, suddenly snatch't by the hand of Grace, out of the mid'st of their wickedness, as fire-brands out of the fire. Is it therefore the safest course to go on in a manifest rebellion against God, till possibly he may do so by thee also? how many thousand may have dropt into Hell since thou heard'st of such an instance (as a worthy person speaks to that purpose*) If thou hast heard of one *Elijah* fed by Ravens, and of some thousands by our Saviours miracles, canst thou thence plead a repeal of that law to the world; *they that will not labour, shall not eat*; or is it a safer or wiser course to wait till food drop into thy mouth from Heaven, then to use a prudent care for the maintenance of thy life? If thou say thou hearest but of few that are wrought upon in this way,

* Mr. Baxter.

*ment, of their own foregoing expectation and endeavours* Remember (and let the thought of it startle thee) that there are *but few that are saved.* And therefore are so few wrought upon in this way, because so few will be perswaded to it. But can't thou say (though God hath not bound himself to the meer natural endeavours of his creature neither) that ever any took this course, and persisted with faithful diligence, but they succeeded in it?

What thou talkest of the *freeness of Gods grace,* looks like an hypocritical pretence. Is there no way to *honour his grace,* but by *affronting his authority?* but to sin, *that grace may abound?* Sure grace will be better pleased by obedience, than by such sacrifice. For a miserable perishing wretch to use Gods means to help it self; doth that look like merit? Is the Beggar afraid thou should'st interpret his coming to thy door, and seeking thy alms, to signifie, as if he thought he had deserved them? I hope thou wilt acknowledge thy self less then the least of all Gods mercies, and that thou canst not deserve from him a morsel of bread, may'st thou not therefore, in thy necessity, labour for thy living? least thou should'st intrench upon the freeness of Divine bounty? With as much wisdome, and reason, mightest thou decline the use of all other means, to preserve thy life (which thou must owe always to free mercy) to eat when thou art hungry, to take physick when thou art sick, least thou should'st intimate thy self to have merited the strength, and health sought thereby.

Nor

Nor can I think of any rational pretence that can more plausibly be insisted on, then these that have been thus briefly discust. And it must needs be difficult to bring any appearance of reason for the patronage of so ill a cause, as the careless giving up of a mans soul to perish eternally, that is visibly capable of eternal blessedness. And certainly were we once apprehensive of the case, the attempt of disputing a man into such a resolution, would appear much more ridiculous, then, if one should gravely urge arguments to all the neighbourhood, to perswade them to burn their houses, to put out their eyes, to kill their children, or cut their own Throats. And sure, let all imaginable pretences be debated to the uttermost, and it will appear that nothing with-holds men from putting forth all their might in the indeavour of getting a Spirit Suitable to this blessedness, but an obstinately perverse, and sluggish heart, dispoil'd, and naked of all shew of reason, and excuse. And though that be a hard task to reason against *meer will*, yet that being the way to make men willing: and the latter part of the work proposed, in pursuance of *this direction*: I shall recommend only some such considerations as the Text it self will suggest, for the stirring up, and perswading of slothful reluctant hearts (chusing those as the most proper limits, and not being willing to be infinite, herein, as amidst so great a variety of considerations to that purpose, one might.)

That, in general, which I shall propose, shall be only the *misery of the unrighteous*: where-

of

of we may take a view in the oppoſite bleſſedneſs *here* deſcribed. The *contradictories* whereto will afford a *Negative*. The *Contraries apoſitive* deſcription of this miſery. So that each *conſideration* will be double, which I ſhall now (rather glance at then) inſiſt upon. Pæna { Damni / Sensus:

1. Conſider then; if thou be found at laſt unqualified for this bleſſedneſs; How wilt thou bear it to be baniſh't eternally from the *bleſſed face of God*? There will be thoſe that ſhall behold *that face in righteouſneſs*, ſo ſhalt not thou. The wicked is driven away in his wickedneſs, with a *never more ſee my face*. 1.

Again, what amazing Viſions wilt thou have? what gaſhly, frightful objects to converſe with, amidſt thoſe horrours of eternal darkneſs: when the Devil, and his Angels ſhall be thy everlaſting aſſociates! What direful images ſhall thoſe accurſed, enraged Spirits, and thy own fruitful parturient imagination for ever entertain thee with, and preſent to thy view?

2. Is it a ſmall thing with thee, to be deſtitute of all thoſe *inherent excellencies*, which the perfected Image of God, whereof thou waſt capable, comprehends? view them over in that (too defective) account, ſome of the former pages gave thee of them. Thou art none of thoſe bright ſtars, thoſe ſons of the morning, thoſe bleſſed glorified Spirits: Thou might'ſt have been. But

Conſider, *what art thou*? what ſhalt thou for ever be? what image or likeneſs ſhalt thou bear

bear? alas! poor wretch thou art now a Fiend conformed to thy hellish partners; thou bearest *their accursed likeness*. Death is now finished in thee, and as thou *sowedst to the flesh, thou reapest corruption*. Thou art become a loathsome Carcass; the Worms that never die, abound in thy putrified, filthy soul. Thou hast an Hell in thee. Thy venomous lusts are now *mature*, are in their full grown state. If a world of iniquity, a fulness of deadly poyson, tempered by Hell fire, is *here* sometimes, to be found in a *little member*, what will there then be in all thy parts and powers;

Jam. 3. 6.

3. Consider, how blessed a satisfaction dost thou lose? how pleasant, and delightful a *rest*, arising both from the sight of so much glory, and so peaceful a temper, and constitution of Spirit? Here thou might'st have injoyed an eternal undisturbed rest.

But for *rest*, and *satisfaction* thou hast vexation; and endless torment, both by what thou *beholdest*, and what thou *feelest within thee*. Thy dreadful visions will not let thee *rest*; but the chief matter of thy disquiet, and torment, is in the very *temper*, and *composition* of thy soul. Thy horrid lusts are fuller of poysonous energie, and are destitute of their wonted objects, whence they turn all their power, and fury upon thy miserable self. Thy inraged passions would fly in the face of God, but they spend themselves in tormenting the soul that bred them. Thy curses, and blasphemies, the invenom'd Darts, pointed at Heaven, are reverberated, and driven back into thy own heart. And therefore,

4. Con-

4. Conſider what awaking haſt thou? Thou awakeſt not into the mild, and chearful light of that bleſſed day, wherein the Saints of the moſt High, hold their ſolemn, joyful triumph. But thou awakeſt into that great and terrible day of the Lord (doſt thou deſire it for what end is it to thee?) a day of darkneſs, *and not light*; a gloomy, and a ſtormy day. *The day of thy birth* is not a more *hateful*, then this is a *dreadful* day. Thou awakeſt, and art beſet with terrours, preſently apprehended, and drag'd before thy glorious, ſevere Judge; and thence into eternal torments. O happy thou, might'ſt thou never awake, might the grave conceale, and its *more ſilent darkneſs* cover thee for ever. But ſince thou muſt awake, then, how much more happy wert thou, if thou would'ſt ſuffer thy ſelf to be awaken'd now. What, to loſe, and endure ſo much, becauſe thou wilt not now a little beſtir thy ſelf, and look about thee? Sure thy Conſcience tells thee, thou art urg'd but to what is *poſſible*, and *lawful*, and *hopeful*, and *neceſſary*, methinks, if thou be a man, and not a ſtone; if thou haſt a reaſonable Soul about thee, thou ſhalt preſently fall to work, and rather ſpend thy days in ſerious thoughts, and prayers, and tears, than run the hazard of loſing ſo tranſcendent a glory, and of ſuffering miſery, which, as *now* thou art *little* able to *conceive*, thou wilt *then* be *leſs* able to *endure*.

CHAP.

## CHAP. XVIII.

Rule 4. *Directing to the endeavour of a gradual improvement in ſuch a diſpoſedneſs of Spirit (as ſhall be found in any meaſure already attained) towards that bleſſedneſs. That 'tis bleſſedneſs begun which diſpoſes to the Conſummate ſtate of it. That we are therefore to endeavour the daily encreaſe of our preſent knowledge of God, conformity to him, and the ſatisfiedneſſe of our ſpirits therein.*

4. Rule. THat when we find our ſelves in any diſpoſition towards this bleſſedneſs; we endeavour a gradual improvement therein; to get the habitual temper of our ſpirits made daily more ſuitable to it.

We muſt ſtill remember, we have not yet attained, and muſt therefore continue preſſing forward *to this mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus.* That prize (not price, as we commonly miſread it in our Bibles) of which the Apoſtle here ſpeaks is (as may be ſeen by looking back to *v.* 8, 9, &c.) the ſame with the bleſſedneſs in the Text. Such a knowledge of Chriſt, as ſhould infer at laſt his participation with him in his ſtate of glory, or of *the reſurrection of the dead.* This is the ultimate term, the ſcope or end, of that high calling of God in Chriſt, ſo 'tis alſo ſtated elſewhere,

Phil. 3. 14. Βραβεῖον.

1 Pet. 1 10.

who

who hath *called* us into his eternal glory by Chriſt Jeſus.

Now we ſhould therefore frequently recount how far ſhort we are of this glory, and ſtir up our ſouls to more vigorous indeavours in order to it.

Our ſuitableneſs to this bleſſedneſs ſtands *in our having the elements and firſt principles of it in us*; 'tis glory onely that fits for glory, ſome previous ſights, and impreſſions of it, and a pleaſant complacential reliſh thereof, that frame and attemper us, by degrees, to the full conſummate ſtate of it. This is that therefore we muſt endeavour.

A *growing* { *Knowledge of God*, *Conformity to him*, and *Satisfiedneſs of Spirit therein.*

What we expect ſhould be one day perfect, we muſt labour may be, in the mean time, alwayes growing.

1. *Our knowledge of God.* The knowledge of him I here principally intend is not *notional*, and *ſpeculative*, but (which is more ingredient to our bleſſedneſs, both inchoate and perfect) that *of converſe*, that *familiar knowledge*, which we uſually expreſs by the name of *acquaintance*. See that this knowledge of him be encreaſed daily; Let us now uſe our ſelves much with God: Our knowledge of him muſt aim at *conformity to him*, and how powerful a thing is *converſe* in order hereto? How inſenſibly is it wont to transform men, and mould anew their Spirits, Language, Garbe, Deportment? To be remov'd from the *ſolitude*, or *rudeneſs* of

of the Country, to a *City*, or *University*; What an alteration doth it make? How is such a person devested by degrees of his rusticitio or his more uncomely and agrest manners? Objects we converse with beget their Image upon us. *They walked after vanity, and became vain,* Jer. 2. 5. saith Jeremiah. And Solomon, *He that walketh with the wise shall be wise.* Prov. 13. 20. Walking is an usual expression of converse. So to converse with the *holy*, is the way to be *holy*, with *heaven* the way to be *heavenly*, with *God* the way to be *God-like*.

Let us therefore make this our present business much to *acquaint our selves with God*. We count upon seeing him *face to face*, of being alwayes in his presence, beholding his glory that speaketh very intimate acquaintance indeed. How shall we reach that pitch? what to live now as strangers to him? Is that the way? *The path of the righteous is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto perfect day.* Prov. 4. 18. The text shews us the *righteous mans end*, to *behold the glory of Gods face*, &c. 'tis easie to apprehend, then *his way* must needs have in it a *growing brightness*, as he comes still nearer this end. Every nearer approach to a lucid thing infers (to us) an increase of light from it. We should therefore be *following on to know the Lord*; and we shall see his *going forth will be before us as the morning*. Hos. 6. 3. He will be still visiting us with *renewed increasing* light, (for such is morning light, *fresh* and *growing* light) and ere long it will be perfect day. Labour we to improve our knowledge of God to such a degree of acquaintance,

quaintance, as our preſent ſtate can admit of. To be as inward with him as we can, to familiarize our ſelves to him. His Goſpel aims at this to make thoſe that were *afar off nigh*. Far-diſtant objects we can have no diſtinct view of. He can give us little account of a perſon that hath only ſeen him afar off; ſo God beholds the proud afar off. That is, he will have no acquaintance with them. Whereas with the humble he will be familiar, *he will dwell*, (as in a family) *with them*. So the ungodly behold God till he brings them in, and make them nigh: then they are no longer ſtrangers but of his family, and houſhold, now throughly acquainted. Several notes there are of *a through acquaintance* which we ſhould endeavour may concur, in our acquaintance with God, in that analogy which the caſe will bear. Iſa. 57. 15.

*To know his nature*, or (as we would ſpeak of a man) what will pleaſe and diſpleaſe him, ſo as to be able in the whole courſe of our daily converſation to *approve* our ſelves to him. To have the skill ſo to manage our converſation, as to continue a correſpondence, not interrupted by any of our offenſive unpleaſing demeanours: To *walk worthy of God unto all well-pleaſing*. It concerns us moſt to ſtudy and indeavour this *practical knowledge* of the nature of God; what truſt, and love, and fear, and purity, &c. his faithfulneſs, and greatneſs, his goodneſs, and holineſs, &c. do challenge from us; What may in our daily walking be agreeable, what repugnant to the ſeveral Attributes of his being.

*To know his secrets*; to be as it were of the Cabinet-councel *(the word used by the Psalmist hath a peculiar significancy to that purpose; to signifie, not only counsel, but a council, or the concessus of persons that consult together.) This is his gracious vouchsafement, to humble, reverential souls. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him*; such acquaintance with him is to be sought to know the (communicable) secrets both of his mind and heart. Of his *mind*, his truths, Gospel-mysteries, that were kept *secret* from ages, and generations. We have the mind of Christ. This is great inwardness of his heart. His love his good will, his kind bosome-thoughts towards our souls.

* Psal. 25 14. הסוד

*To know his methods*, and the course of his dispensations towards the World, his Church, and specially our own Spirits. This is great *knowledge of God*, to have the skill to trace his footsteps, and observe by comparing times with times, that such a course he more usually holds; and accordingly, with great probability, collect, from what we have seen, and observed, what we may expect. What order and succession there is of storms of wrath, to clouds of sin, and again of peaceful, lucid intervals, when such storms have infer'd penitential tears. In what exigences, and distresses humble mourners may expect Gods visits, and consolations. To recount in how great extremities, former experience hath taught us not to despair, and from such experiences still to argue our selves into fresh reviving hopes when the

the ſtate of things (whether publick or private, outward or ſpiritual) ſeems forlorn.

*To know the proper ſeaſons of addreſs to him*; and how to behave our ſelves moſt acceptably in his preſence. In what diſpoſitions and poſtures of Spirit, we are fitteſt for his converſe, ſo as to be able to come to him in a good hour, *in a time when he may be found.* Pſal. 32. 6.

*To know his voice*: This diſcovers acquaintance. *The ear trieth words, as the mouth taſteth meats.* Gods righteous ones that are filled with the fruits of righteouſneſs, do proportionably abound in *knowledge and in all ſenſe.* Phil. 1. 9. They have quick, naked, unvitiated ſenſes to diſcern between good and evil; Yea and can have the ſuffrage of ſeveral ſenſes concerning the ſame Object. They have a kind of taſte in their ear. They taſte the good word of God even in his previous workings on them. Being-born they are intimated to have *taſted in the word* how gracious the Lord is. As they grow up thereby they have ſtill a more judicious ſenſe, and can more certainly diſtinguiſh, when God ſpeaks to them, and when a ſtranger goes about to counterfeit his voice. They can tell, at firſt hearing, what is grateful, and nutritive, what offenſive, and hurtful to the divine life: what is harmonious and agreeable, what diſſonant to the Goſpel *already received*, ſo that an Angel from heaven muſt expect no welcome if he bring *another.* Job 14 35. αἰσθητήρια γεγυμνασμένα. Heb. 5. ult. Heb. 6. 1 Pet. 1. 2, 3. John 10.

*To know his inward motions and impulſes*; When his hand toucheth our hearts, to be able to ſay, *this is the finger of God*, there is

Cant. 5. 3.

something divine in this touch. *My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved.* This speaks acquaintance when the soul can say, *I know his very touch*, the least impression from him, I can distinguish it from thousands of objects that daily beat upon my heart.

So we apprehend God proportionably more clearly as the Idea we have of a person is more distinct that we have of him by the sight of his picture or face through a glass, beyond that which we have by hearing a reported description of him though by himself unseen. This is acquaintance with God.

*To understand his looks*; to know the meaning of his aspects, and glances, of the various casts, as it were of his eye. Such things intimate friends can, in a sort, talk by with one another; *I will guide thee by mine eye*; that implyes an intelligent teachable subject. We have now no full-ey'd appearances of God; he shews himself, looks in upon us through the lattess, through a vail, or shadow, or a glass, That measure of acquaintance with him to be able to discern and own him in his appearances, is a great participation of heaven. Utter unacquaintance with God is expresst by the denyal of these two, *ye have neither heard his voice, nor seen his shape*, John 5.

Finally which brings us home to the text, *to keep our eye intentively fixed on him* not to understand *his* looks only as before but to return our own intimate acquaintance; when such friends meet, it is much expresst, and improv'd by the eye, by a reciprocation of glances, or (which speaks more inwardness) more fixed views; when their eyes do even feed and feast upon each other. This we should endeavour to be as in a continual interview with God.

How frequent mention have we of the fixed posture of *his* eye towards Saints. *To this*

*this man will I look*; I have found out, *q. d.* that which ſhall be ever the delight of mine eye, do not divert me. Towards him I *will* look. What he ſpeaks of the material Temple is ultimately to be refer'd to that which is typified, *his Church, his Saints*, united with his Chriſt, *mine eys and my heart ſhall be there perpetually*, and elſewhere, He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous, He cannot (admirable grace) allow himſelf to look off, to turn aſide his eye. And he ſeems impatient of the averſion of theirs, *Let me ſee thy countenance* (ſaith he) *for it is comely.* 1 King. 9. 3. Job 6. 37. Pſal. 33. 18; 34. 15. Cant.

Is it not much more reaſonable it ſhould be thus with us towards him? that we ſhould be more delighted to behold real comelineſſe than he with what is ſo only by his gracious vouchſafement and eſtimation? how careful ſhould we be that our eye may at every turn meet his? that he never look towards us, and find it in the ends of the earth, careleſſly wandring from him? How well doth it become us to ſet the Lord alwayes before us? to have our eye ever towards the Lord? Pſal. 16. 8. Pſal. 25.

This you ſee is the initial leading thing in this bleſſedneſs of heaven. So it muſt have alſo a prime ingrediency into our heaven on earth. It is a part of celeſtial bleſſedneſs; but it is not *peculiar* to it. The preſent bleſſedneſs the righteous injoy here is a participation of heaven. It hath ſomething in it of every thing that is ingredient into that *perfect bleſſedneſs*. Our preſent knowledge of God is often expreſt by *viſion*, or ſight, as we have

had occaſion to obſerve in many paſſages of Scripture. He hath given us ſuch a viſive power and made it connatural to that heavenly creature begotten of him in all the true ſubjects of this bleſſedneſs. We know that we are *of God*, and preſently it follows, he hath given us an *underſtanding to know him*, that is true. This new man is not born blind. The bleſſed God himſelf is become liable to the view of his regenerate intellectual eye, clarify'd and fill'd with vigour and Spirit from himſelf. He therefore that hath made (that hath new formed) this eye ſhall not he be ſeen by it? ſhall not we turn it upon him? Why do we not more frequently bleſs our eye, with that ſight? This Object (though of ſo high excellency and glory) will not hurt but perfect, and ſtrengthen it. They are refreſhing vital beams that iſſue from it. Sure we have no excuſe that we eye God ſo little, *i. e.* that we mind him no more. Why have we ſo few thoughts of him in a day? What, to let ſo much time paſs, and not ſpare him a look? a thought? Do we intend to imploy our ſelves on eternity in the viſions of God, and is our preſent averſion from him, and intention upon vanity, our beſt preparation thereto? This loudly calls for redreſs. Shall God be waiting all the day as on purpoſe to catch our eye? to intercept a look? and we ſtudiouſly decline him, and ſtill look another way, as of choice? and what is it but choice? can we pretend a neceſſity to forget him all the day? How cheap is the expence of a look? how little would it coſt

1 John 5. 19, 20.

cost us, and yet how much of duty might it express, how much of comfort and joy might it bring into us?

How great is our offence and loss that we live not in such more constant views of God? Herein we sin and suffer both at once (things both very unsuitable to heaven.) Mindfulness of God is the living Spring of all holy and pleasant affections and deportments towards him; sets all the wheels agoing, makes the soul as the Chariots of *Aminadab*. These wheels have their eyes also, are guided by a mind, by an intellectual principle. Knowing intelligent beings (as we also are by participation, and according to our measure) so act mutually towards one another. We cannot move towards God but with an *open* eye seeing him, and our way towards him. If we close our eyes, we stand still, or blindly run another course, we know not whither. All sin is darkness, whether it be *neglect of good*, or *doing of evil*. Its way is a way of darkness; as a course of holy motion is *walking in the light*. Our shutting our eyes towards God creates that darkness; surrounds us with a darkness comprehensive of all sin. Now is every thing of enjoyned duty waved, and any evil done, that sinful nature prompts us to. Well might it be said, *He that sinneth hath not seen God*. When we have made our selves this darkness, we fall of course under Sathans Empire, and are presently within his Dominions. He is the Prince of darkness; and can rule us now at his will. Perishing lost souls are such as in them the God

John 3. 11.

of this world hath blinded their minds. --To open their eyes and turn them from darkneſs to light, is to turn them alſo from the power of Sathan unto God. What an hell of wickedneſs are we brought into in the twinkling of an eye! We are without God in the world, as if a man wink, though at noon-day, he hath as it were put out the Sun, 'tis with him as if there were no ſuch thing. When we have baniſhed God out of our light, and forgotten him, 'tis with us as if there were *no God*. If ſuch a ſtate grow habitual to us, (as we know every ſinful averſion of our eye from God tends thereto) what wickedneſs is there that will not lurk in this darkneſs? How often in Scripture is *forgetting God* uſed as a *character*, yea as paraphraſe, a full (though ſummary) expreſſion of ſin in general? As if the wickedneſs, the malignity, the very hell it ſelf of *ſin*, were wholly included (and not connated only) here. *Now conſider this* (after ſo dreadful an ennumeration, ſo black a Catalogue) *all that forget God*. And (as deep calleth to deep, one hell to another) *The wicked ſhall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God*. That keep that maſs of wickedneſs, of pride, of perſecution, curſing, blaſphemy, deceit, and miſchief, all *meet with one that hath not God in all his thoughts*.

Pſal. 50.

Pſal. 9.

But who is ſo hardy to look the holy God in the face and ſin againſt him? what an aſtoniſhment is it when he *watches over* preſent ſin; or brings forth *former ſins* out of ſecret darkneſs and ſets them in the light of his countenance? Who

Who that underſtands any thing of the Nature, and Majeſty of God, dare call him for a witneſs of his ſinning? The worſt of men would find themſelves under ſome reſtraint, could they but obtain of themſelves to ſit down ſometimes and *ſolemnly think of God.* Much more would it prove an advantage, (them whom I moſt intend) to ſuch as ſin within the nearer call, and reach of mercy; that ſin not to the utmoſt latitude. Even ſuch as lead the ſtricteſt lives, and are ſeldom found to tranſgreſs, are not their ſins found to begin with forgetting God? Did they eye God more, would they not ſin leſſe frequently and with greater regret? You his Saints that have made a Covenant with him by Sacrifice, that profeſs the greateſt love and devotedneſs to him, and ſeem willing your ſelves to become ſacrifices, and lay down your lives for his ſake; what is it a harder thing to give him a look, a thought? or is it not too common a thing, without neceſſity (and then not without injury) to withhold theſe from him? Let us bethink our ſelves, are not the principal diſtempers of our Spirits, and diſorders yet obſervable in our lives to be refer'd hither? *As to enjoyned ſervices*, what; ſhould we venture on omiſſions, if we had God in our eye? or ſerve him with ſo declining backward hearts? Should we dare to let paſs a day, in the Even whereof we might write down *nothing done for God this day?* Or ſhould we ſerve him as an hard Maſter, with ſluggiſh, deſpondent Spirits? The Apoſtle forbids ſervants to ſerve with eye-ſervice, as men-pleaſers, meaning they ſhould eye

eye men leſs, and God more. Sure, *as to him*, our ſervice is not enough *eye-ſervice*. We probably, eye men more than we ſhould, but we do not eye Him enough. Hence ſuch hanging of hands, ſuch feebleneſs of knees, ſuch lazineſs, and indifferency, ſo little of an active zeal, and laborious diligence, ſo little *fervency of Spirit in ſerving the Lord*. Hence alſo ſuch an averſion to hazardous ſervices, ſuch fear of attempting any thing (though never ſo apparent important Duty) that may prove coſtly, or hath danger in it. *We look not to him that is inviſible.*

*And as to forbidden things*, ſhould we be ſo proud, ſo paſſionate, ſo earthly, ſo ſenſual, if we had God more in view? Should we ſo much ſeek our ſelves, and indulge our own wills, and humors, drive a deſign with ſuch ſolicitude, and intention of mind, for our private intereſts? ſhould we walk at ſuch a latitude, and more conſult our own inclination than our rule, allow our ſelves in ſo much vanity of converſation, did we mind God as we ought?

And do we not ſenſibly puniſh our ſelves in this neglect? what a diſmal Chaos is this world while we ſee not God in it. To live deſtitute of a divine preſence, to diſcern no beam of the heavenly glory. To go up and down day by day, and perceive nothing of God, no glimmering, no appearance: this is *diſconſolate*, as well as *ſinful* darkneſs. What can we make of Creatures, what of the daily events of Providence, if we ſee not in them the glory

glory of a Deity; if we do not contemplate, and adore the divine wisedom, power, and goodnes, diffused every where. Our practical Atheism, and inobservance of God makes the World become to us the *region and shadow of death*, states us as among Ghosts, and Spectres, makes all things look with a ghastly face, imprints death upon every thing we see, encircles us with gloomy dreadful shades, and with uncomfortable apparitions. To behold the tragical Spectacles alwayes in view, the violent lusts, the rapine and rage of some, the calamitous suffrings, the miseries, and ruines of others, to hear every corner resounding with the insultations of the Oppressor, and the mournful groans of the oppressed, what a painful continuing death were it to be in the world *without God*! At the best all things were but a *vanishing scheme*, an Image seen in the dark. The Creation, a thing, the fashion whereof were passing away. The whole Contexture, and System of Providence were meer confusion, without the least concinnity or order. Religion an acknowledged trifle, a meer mockery? What, *to wink* our selves into so much darknes, and desolation? And by sealing up our eyes against the divine light and glory, to confirm so formidable miseries upon our own souls? how dreadfully, shall we, herein, revenge our own folly in nullifying him to our selves, *who is the All in All*? Sure there is little of Heaven in all this?

But if now we open our eyes upon that all-comprehending glory, apply them to a steady intuition

intuition of God; how heavenly a life shall we then live in the world! To have God alwayes in view as the director and end of all our actions. To make our eye crave leave of God; to consult him ere we adventure upon any thing, and implore his guidance, and blessing. Upon all occasions to direct our prayers to him and *look up*. To make our eye await his commanding look, ready to receive all intimations of his will; this is an angelical life. To be as those ministers of his that are alwayes ready to do his pleasure. To make our eye do him homage and expresse our dependence, and trust. To approve our selves in every thing to him, and act as alwayes in his presence, observing still how his eye observes us; and exposing our selves willingly to its inspection and search; contented alwayes he should see through and through us. Surely there is much of heaven in this life, so we should endeavour to live here: (I cannot omit to give you this instruction in the words of an Heathen) "we ought "(saith he) so to live as alwayes within view, "order our cogitations as if some one might, "or can look into the very inwards of our "breast. For, to what purpose is it to hide "any thing from man? from God nothing "can be hid, he is continually present to our "Spirits, and comes amidst our inmost thoughts, &c.

*Sic certe vivendum est tanquam in conspectu vivamus, &c.* Sen. Epist. 83.

*This is to walk in the light* amidst a serene placid mild light, that infuses no unquiet thoughts, amidst no guilty fears, nothing that can disturb or annoy us.

To

To eye God in all our comforts and obſerve the ſmiling aſpect of his face, when he diſpenſes them to us.

To eye Him in all our afflictions, and conſider the paternal wiſdom that inſtructs us in them; how would this increaſe our mercies, and mitigate our troubles?

To eye Him in all his Creatures, and obſerve the various prints of the Creators glory impreſſ upon them. With how lively a luſtre would it cloath the world? and make every thing look with a pleaſant face! what an heaven were it to look upon God, as filling all in all, and how ſweetly would it, ere-while, raiſe our ſouls into ſome ſuch ſweet ſeraphick ſtrains *holy, holy, --the whole earth is full of his glory.* Iſa. 6. 2, 3.

To eye Him in his Providences, and conſider how all events are with infinite wiſdom diſpoſed into an apt ſubſerviency to his holy Will, and Ends. What difficulties would hence be ſolved? what ſeeming inconſiſtencies reconcil'd? and how much would it contribute to the eaſe and quiet of our minds?

To eye Him in his Chriſt, the expreſſe Image of his perſon, the brightneſs of his glory, and in the Chriſtian Oeconomy the Goſpel-revelation and Ordinances through which he manifeſt himſelf.

To behold Him in the poſture wherein he ſaves ſouls, *clad with the garments of Salvation*, girt with power and apparell'd with love, travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, *mighty to ſave.*

To view Him addreſsing himſelf to allure and

and win to him the hearts of ſinners, when he diſcovers himſelf in Chriſt, upon that reconciling deſign, make *grace* that brings ſalvation *appear*, teaching to deny ungodlineſs, &c.

To behold Him entring into humane fleſh, pitching his Tabernacle among men, hanging out his Enſignes of peace, laying his traine, ſpreading his nets, the cords of a man, the bands of love.

To ſee Him in his Chriſt-aſcending the Croſs, lifted up to draw all men to him; and conſider that mighty love, of *juſtice* and *ſouls*, both ſo eminently conſpicuous in that ſtupendious ſacrifice. Here to fix our eyes looking to Jeſus and behold him whom we have pierced.

*To ſee His power and glory, as they are wont to be ſeen in his ſanctuaries*; to obſerve him in the ſolemnities of his worſhip, and the graceful poſtures, wherein he holds communion with his Saints, when he ſeats himſelf amidſt them on the Throne of grace, receives their addreſſes, diſpenſes the tokens and pledges of his love. Into what tranſports might theſe viſions put us every day!

Let us then ſtir up our drowſie ſouls, open our heavy eyes, and turn them upon God, inure and habituate them to a conſtant view of him (yet vailed) face, that we may not ſee him onely by *caſual glances*, but as thoſe that *ſee his face*, and make it our buſineſs to gain a thorough knowledge of him.

But let us remember that all our preſent Viſions of God, muſt aim at a further Conſor-

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nity to him, they must design *imitation*, not the *satisfying of curiosity*, our looking must not therefore be an inquisitive busie prying into the unrevealed things of God. Carefully abstain from such over-bold, presumptuous looks: but remember we are to eye God as our *pattern*. Wherein he is to be so, he hath plainly enough reveal'd and propos'd himself to us. And consider this in the pattern both to which we ought, and to which we *shall* be conformed (if we make it our business) so will *sense of duty*, and *hope of success* concur to fix our eye and keep it steady.

Especially let us endeavour to manage and guide our eye aright, in beholding him, that our sight of him may most effectually subserve his design of being *like him*, and herein nothing will be more conducible than that our looks be qualified with { Reverence and Love.

1. Let them be reverential looks. We shall never be careful to imitate a despised pattern; or that we think meanly of, when this is the intimate sense of our souls; Who is a God like unto thee glorious in holiness! There is none holy as the Lord; this will set all our powers on work, such sights will command, and overawe our souls into a conformity to him. Subjects have sometimes affected to imitate the very imperfections and deformities of their *adored Prince*. Let us greaten our thoughts of God. Look to him with a submissive adoring eye. Let every look import worship and subjection. Who can stand before apprehended *soveriga*

*vereign Majesty*, with such a temper of soul shall signifie an affront to it? This will make every thing in us unsutable to God, yield, and vanish, and render our souls susceptible of all divine and holy impressions.

2. Let them be friendly, and (as far as may consist with that reverence) *amorous* looks. 'Tis natural to affect and endeavour likeness to them we love. Let *love* alwayes sit in our eye, and inspirit it; this will represent God always amiable, will infinitely commend to us his nature, and attributes, and even ravish us into his likeness. The loving Spouse often glories to wear her beloved Husbands picture on her breast. The love of God will much more make us affect to bear his image in our hearts. His Law is a true representation of him, and *Love* is the fulfilling of that Law, an exemplification of it in our selves. Love will never enter a quarrel, nor admit of any disagreement with God. His more terrible appearances will be commendable in the eye of Love. It thinks no evil. But so interprets and comments upon his severer aspects, whether through his Law or Providence, as judge all amiable, and frame the soul to an answerable deportment.

2. 2. In this way then *let us endeavour a growing conformity unto God.* It hath been much (and not unnecessarily) inculcated already, that the blessedness of the righteous hereafter, doth not consist meerly in beholding an external objective glory, but in *being also glorified.* They are happy by a participated glory, by being made like God, as well as *seeing his glorious likeness*, whereby

whereby the constitution of their Spirits, is changed, and reduced to that excellent harmonious agreeable temper, that holy composure, and peaceful state from which blessednes is inseparable.

As far as we are capable of blessednes in this world, it must be so with us *here*. Glory without us will not make us happy in Heaven, much less will any thing without us make us happy on earth. 'Tis an idle dream of sickly crazie minds, that their blessednes consists in some *external good*, that is separable, and distant from them; which therefore as they blindly guesse, they *uncertainly* pursue; never aiming to *become good*, without which they can never know what it is to be blessed. What felicity are men wont to imagine to themselves in this or that change of their outward condition? were their state such, or such, then they were happy, and should desire no more. As the childs phansie suggests to it, if it were on the top of such a Hill, it could touch the Heavens, but when with much toil it hath got thither, it finds it self as far off as before. We have a shorter, and more compendious way to it, would we allow our selves to understand it. *A right temper of mind* involves blessednes in it self; 'tis this only *change* we need to endeavour. We wear out our days in vanity, and misery, while we neglect this work, and busie our selves to catch a fugitive shadow, that hovers about us. It can never be well till our own souls be an Heaven to us, and blessednes be a domestique, an home-dwelling inhabitant

there. Till we get a settled principle of holy quietude into our own breasts; & become the soul of peace, with whom the peace of God may find entrance and *abode*: Till we have that treasure within us, that may render us insensible of any dependence on a forraign good, or fear of a forraign evil. Shall that be the boast and glory of a Phylosopher onely? *I carry all my goods with me where ever I go.* And that a vertuous good man is liable to no hurt? "*Seneca* thinks they discover "a low Spirit, that say, externals can adde any Epist. 92. "thing (though but a very little) to the felicity of an honest mind, as if (saith he) man "could not be content with the light of the "Sun without the help of a candle, or a spark": and speaking of *the constancy of the vertuous man* (saith he) "They do ill that say, such an evil is "tolerable to him, such a one intolerable, as "that confine the greatness of his mind within "certain bounds and limits. Adversity (he "tells us) overcomes us, if it be not wholly "overcome. *Epicurus* (saith he) the very "patron of your sloth, acknowledges yet, that "unhappy events can *seldom* disturb the mind "of a vertuous person (and he adds) how hath "he *almost* uttered the voice of a *man*! "pray saith he, speak out a little more "boldly, and say he is above them altogether." Such apprehensions the more vertuous Heathen have had of the efficacy and defensative power of Moral goodness (however defective the notion might be of the thing it self.) Hence *Socrates* the *Pagan* Martyr is reported to have cryed out (when those persons were persecuting

*Max. Tyr. dissert. 2.* who adds, *For a good man cannot receive detriment from an evil man.*

cuting him to death) *Anytus* and *Meletus* can kill me, but they cannot hurt me. And *Anaxarchus* the Philosopher having sharply reproved *Nicocreon*, and being by him ordered to be beaten to death with iron Malets, bids *strike on, strike* on, thou may'st (saith he) break in pieces this vessel of *Anaxarchus*, but *Anaxarchus* himself thou canst not touch. Diogen. Laert. in Anaxarchus.

Shall Christianity here confess it self outvy'd? shall we to the reproach of our Religion yield the day to *Pagan-morality*, and renew the occasion of the ancient complaint, *That the Faith of Christians is out-done by the Heathen infidelity*? It is, I remember the challenge of *Cecilius* in *Minucius*. "There is *Socrates* "(saith he) the Prince of Wisdom, whoso- "ever of you Christians is great enough to at- "tempt it, let him imitate him if he can. Me- thinks we should be ambitious to tell the world in our lives (for Christians should live great things, not speak * them) that a greater then *Socrates* is here; to let them see in us, our *represented pattern*; to shew forth higher vertues then those of *Socrates*, even *his*, who hath called *us out of darkness, into his glorious and marvellous light*. *Non præstat fides quod præstitit infidelitas.*

* As this Authours expression is.

Certain it is, that the Sacred Oracles of the Gospel set before us a more excellent pattern, and speak things not less magnificent, but much more modest, and perspicuous. With less pomp of words, they give us a much clearer account of a far more excellent temper of mind, and prescribe the direct, and certain way of attaining it (Do but view over the many passages of Scripture occasionally glanc't at *Chap.* 7.)

But we grope as in the dark for bleſſedneſs, we ſtumble at noon day, as in the night, and wander as if we had no eyes; we miſtake our buſineſs, and lay the Scene of an happy ſtate at a great diſtance from us, in things which we cannot reach, and which if we could, it were to little purpoſe.

Not to ſpeak of groſſer ſenſualiſts (whom at preſent I have leſs in my eye.) Is there not a more refined ſort of perſons, that neglecting the great buſineſs of inſpecting, and labouring to better, and improve their ſpirits; are wholly taken up about the affairs of another Sphere? that are more ſolicitous for *better times*, for a better world, then better ſpirits. That ſeem to think all the happineſs they are capable of on earth, is bound up in this, or that external ſtate of things. Not that the care of all publique concernments ſhould be laid aſide. Leaſt of all a juſt ſolicitude for the Churches welfare; but that ſhould not be pretended, when our own intereſt is the *one thing* with us. And when we are *really ſolicitous* about the Churches intereſts, we ſhould ſtate them aright. God deſigns the afflictions of his people for their Spiritual good, therefore that is a much greater good, then their exemption from ſuffering theſe evils; otherwiſe, his means ſhould eat up his end, and be more expenſive then *that* will countervail; which were an imprudence, no man of tolerable diſcretion would be guilty of. We ſhould deſire the outward proſperity of *Sion* for, it is a *real good*; but in as much as it hath in it the goodneſs,

neſs, not of an *end*, but onely (and that but ſometimes neither) of a *meanſ*; not a conſtant, but a mutable goodneſs; not a principal, but a leſſer ſubordinate goodneſs; we muſt not deſire it *abſolutely*, nor *chiefly*, but with ſubmiſſive, limited deſires. If our hearts are grieved to hear of the *ſufferings* of the Church of God in the world, but not of their *ſins*; If we more ſenſibly regret at any time, the perſecutions, and oppreſſions they undergo, than their ſpiritual diſtempers, their *earthlineſs*, pride, cold love to God, fervent animoſities towards each other; It ſpeaks an uninſtructed carnal mind. We take no right meaſure of the intereſts of Religion, or the Churches welfare, and do moſt probably miſtake our ſelves, as much in judging of our own; and meaſure theirs by our own miſtaken model.

And this is the miſchievous cheat many put upon their own ſouls, and would obtrude (too often) upon others too; that overlooking the great deſign of the Goſpel to transform mens ſpirits, and change them into the Divine likeneſs, they think 'tis Religion enough to eſpouſe a party, and adopt an Opinion; and then vogue themſelves friends to Religion, according to the meaſure of their zeal for their own party or Opinion. And give a very pregnant proof of that zeal by magnifying, or inveighing againſt the times, according as they favour, or frown upon their empty, unſpirited Religion. It being indeed ſuch (a ſecret conſciouſneſs whereof they herein bewray) as

hath no other *life* in it, then what it owes to external favour, and countenance. And therefore all publique rebukes are juſtly apprehended *mortal* to it: whereas that *ſubſtantial Religion* that adequately anſwers the deſign, and is animated by the Spirit of the Goſpel, poſſeſſes the Souls of them that own it, with a ſecure confidence that it can live in any times, and hold their Souls in life alſo. Hence they go on their way with a free, unſolicitous chearfulneſs; enjoying ſilently in their own boſomes that repoſe, and reſt which *naturally* reſults from a ſound, and well compoſed temper of Spirit. They know their happineſs depends upon nothing without them *. That they hold it by a better tenure then that of the world's courteſie. They can be quiet in the midſt of ſtorms, and abound in the want of all things. They can, *in patience poſſeſs their own ſouls*, and in them a vital ſpring of true pleaſure, when they are driven out of all other poſſeſſions. They know the living ſenſe of theſe words; that *the good man is ſatisfied from himſelf*; that to be *Spiritually minded is life and peace*; that *nothing can harm them that are followers of the good*. That *the way to ſee good dayes, is to keep their tongue from evil, and their lips from ſpeaking guile, to depart from evil, and do good, to ſeek peace, and purſue it.*

They cannot live in bad times. They carry that about them that will make the worſt days good to them. Surely they can never be happy in the beſt times, that cannot be ſo in any. Outward proſperity is quite beſides the purpoſe

* Ἰδιώτης σάρξ καὶ χαρακτὴρ, ὑπόστασις ἐξ ἑαυτῆς πρόσωπον ἀρέλιμον ἢ βλαβέρον, ἀλλ' ἐπὶ τῆς ἔξω φιλοσόφου σάρξ καὶ χαρακτὴρ, πάσαν ὠφέλιμον καὶ βλάβερον ἐξ ἑαυτῆς πρόσωπον. *Epict.*

purpose to a distempered Soul, when nothing else troubles, it will torment it self. Besides, we cannot command at pleasure, the benigne aspects of the world, the smiles of the times; we may wait a lifes time, and still find the same adverse posture of things towards us from without. What dotage is it to place our blessednes in something to us *impossible*, that lies wholly out of our power: nd in order whereto we have nothing to *do*, but sit down and wish; and either *faintly hope*, or ragingly despair! We cannot change times, and seasons; nor alter the course of the world, create new Heavens, and new Earth. Would we not think our selves mock't, if God should command us these things, in order to our being happy? 'Tis not our business, these are not the affairs of our own Province (blessed be God 'tis not so large) further then as our bettering our selves may conduce thereto; and this is that which we may do, and ought 'tis our proper work, in obedience, and subordination to God, as his instruments, to govern, and cultivate our own spirits, to intend the affairs of that his Kingdom in us (where we are his Authoriz'd Vice-Royes) that consists in righteousnes, and peace, *and joy in the Holy Ghost*. We can be benigne to our selves, if the world be not so to us; cherish, and adorn our inward man; that though the *outward man* be exposed daily to perish (which we cannot help, and therefore it concerns us not to take thought about it) the *inward* may be renewed day by day. We can take care that our souls may prosper,

that, through our ofcitant neglect, they be not left to languish, and pine away in their own iniquities. They may be daily fed with the Heavenly hidden Manna, and with the Fruits of the Paradise of God, they may enjoy at home a continual feast, and with an holy freedom luxuriate in Divine Pleasures, the joyes wherewith the strangers intermeddles not, if we be not unpropitious, and unkind to our selves.

And would we know wherein that sound, and happy complexion of Spirit lies, that hath so much of Heaven in it. *'Tis a present gradual participation of the Divine likeness.* It consists in being conformed to God: 'tis (as the Moralists tells us) * If one would give a short compendious Module of it. *Such a temper of mind as becomes God*; or to give an account of it, *in his own words*, who prescribes it, and who is himself the highest Pattern of this blessed Frame.* *'Tis to be transformed in the renewing of our minds, so as to be able to prove what is the good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God*: That is experimentally to find it in our selves, impress, and wrought into our own spirits, so as to have the complacential relish, and savour of its Goodness, Excellency, and Pleasantness diffused thorow our souls. Where, remember, this was written to such as were supposed Saints; whence it must be understood of a continued, progressive transformation, *a renewing of the inward man dayly day* (as is the Apostles expression elsewhere.) 'Tis a more perfect reception of the impress of God, revealing himself

* *Deum; ut breviter tibi formam hanc scribam, talis animus sapientis viri esse debet qualis Deum decet.* Sen. Epist.

* Rom. 12 2

ſelf in the Goſpel; the growth and tendency of the New Creature, begotten unto the eternal bleſſedneſs, towards its mature, and moſt perfect ſtate, and ſtature in the fruition thereof.

And 'tis this I am now preſſing, in as much as ſome account hath been already given (according as we can now imperfectly gueſſe at it, and ſpell it out) what the conſtitution of the holy ſoul is, in its glorified ſtate, when it perfectly partakes the Divine likeneſs; that when we find in our ſelves any principles, and firſt elements of that bleſſed frame, we would endeavour the gradual improvement thereof; and be making towards that perfection. This therefore being our preſent work; let it be remembred wherein that participated likeneſs of God hath been ſaid to conſiſt; and labour now the neareſt approach to that pitch and ſtate. Your meaſures muſt be taken from what is moſt perfect, come now as near it as you can, and as that *Pagans* advice is; "If yet "thou art not *Socrates*, however, live as one "that would fain be *Socrates*. Though yet thou art not perfect, live as one that aims at it, and would be ſo. Epictet.

Onely, it muſt be conſidered, *that the conformity to God*, of our *preſent ſtate*, *is in extent larger*, and more comprehenſive, then that of our *future*; though it be unſpeakably leſs perfect in degree. For there is no Moral Excellency (that we have any preſent knowledge of) belonging to our glorified ſtate, which is not in ſome degree, neceſſarily, to be found in

in Saints on earth; But there are some things which the exigency of our present state makes necessary to us, *here*, which will not be so in the state of glory. Repentance, Faith, as it respects the Mediatour; patience of injuries, pity to the distressed, &c. These things, and whatsoever else, whose objects cease, must be understood to cease with them. In short, *here* is requisite all that Moral good, which concerns both our *end*, and *way*; *there*, what concerns our *end* onely.

Yet is the whole compass of that gracious frame of spirit, requisite in this our present state, all comprehended *in conformity to God.* Partly, in as much as some of these graces which will cease hereafter, in their exercise, as not having objects to draw them forth into act; have their pattern in some communicable Attributes of God, which will cease also, as to their denomination and exercise; their objects then ceasing too; as his patience towards sinners; his mercy to the miserable: Partly, in as much as other of those graces now required in us, though they correspond to nothing in God that is capable of the same name, as *Faith in a Saviour*, Repentance of sin (which can have no place in God.) They yet answer to something in this nature, that goes under other names; and is the reason wherefore he requires such things in us. He hath in his nature that faithfulness, and Allsufficient fulness that challenges our faith; and that hatred of sin, which challenges *our* repentance for it, having been guilty of it. His very nature obliges

ſiges him to require thoſe things from us, the ſtate of our caſe being conſidered. So that the ſumme even of our preſent duty lies in receiving this entire impreſſion of the Divine likeneſs (in ſome part invariably, and eternally neceſſary to us, in ſome part neceſſary with reſpect to our preſent ſtate) And herein is our preſent bleſſedneſs alſo involved. If therefore we have any deſign to better our condition in point of bleſſedneſs, it muſt be our buſineſs to endeavour after a fuller participation of all that likeneſs, in all the particulars it comprehends. You can pitch your thoughts upon no part of it, which hath not an evident, direct tendency to the repoſe and reſt of your ſpirits. I ſhall recommend onely ſome few inſtances; that you may ſee how little reaſon, or inducement a ſoul conformed to the holy will of God, hath to ſeek its comforts and content elſewhere.

*Faith* correſponds to the *Truth* of God; as it reſpects Divine Revelations: How pleaſant is to give up our underſtandings to the conduct of ſo ſafe a guide! to the view of ſo admirable things as he reveals.

*It correſponds to his goodneſſe*; as it reſpects his offers; How delectible is it to be filling an empty Soul from the Divine fulneſſe! What pleaſure attends the exerciſe of this Faith towards the Perſon of the Mediatour, *viewing* him in all his Glorious Excellencies, receiving him in all his gracious Communications by this *Eye*, and *Hand*.

How

How pleasant is it to exercise it in reference to *another world*! living, by it, in *a daily prospect of eternity*; in reference to *this world*, to live without care in a chearful dependence on him, that hath undertaken to care for us!

*Repentance* is that by which we *become like* the holy God; to whom our sin had made us most unlike before; how sweet are kindly relentings? penetential tears? and the return of the Soul to its God? and to a right mind!

And who can conceive the Ravishing Pleasures of *love to God*! wherein we not onely *imitate*, but intimately *unite* with him, who is *Love it self*. How pleasant to let our Souls dissolve here! and flow into the Ocean, the element of love!

Our *Fear* corresponds to his *Excellent Greatnesse*; and is not (as it is a part of the New Creature in us) a tormenting servile passion; but a due respectfulness, and observance of God; and there is no mean pleasure in that holy, awful seriousness, unto which it composes, and formes our Spirits.

Our *Humility*, as it respects *him*, answers his *high excellency*, as it respects our own inferiours, *his gracious condescention*. How pleasant is it to fall before him! And how connatural, and agreeable to a good Spirit to stoop low, upon any occasion, to do good!

*Sincerity*

*Sincerity* is a most Godlike excellency; an imitation of his *Truth*, as grounded in his All-sufficiency; which sets him above the necessity, or possibility of any advantage by collusion, or deceit; and corresponds to his Omniscience, and heart-searching eye. It heightens a mans spirit to a holy, and generous boldness; makes him apprehend it beneath him to do an unworthy, dishonest action that should need a palliation, or a concealment. * And gives him the continual pleasure of self approbation to God, whom he chiefly studies, and desires to please.

* As that noble *Roman* whom his architect (about to build him an house) promised to contrive it free from all his neighbours inspection, he replyes, nay if thou have any art in thee, build my house so that all may see what I do. *Vell. Pat.* 3.

*Patience*, a prime Glory of the Divine Majestie continues a mans possession of his own Soul, his Liberty, his Dominion of himself. He is (if he can suffer nothing) a Slave to his vilest and most sordid passions *at home*; his own base fear, and bruitish anger, and effeminate grief, and to any mans lusts, and humours besides, that he apprehends can do him hurt. It keeps a mans Soul in a peaceful calm, delivers him from (that most unnatural) self-torment, defeats the impotent malice of his most implacable enemy, who fain would vex him but cannot.

*Justice*, the Great Attribute of the Judge of all the Earth, as such; so farre as the impression of it takes place among men, preserves the Common Peace of the World, and the Private Peace of each man in his own bosome, so that the *for-*

*mer*

*mer* be not disturbed by *doing* of mutual injuries, nor the *latter* by the conscience of *having done them.*

*The brotherly love of fellow Christians*, the impression of that *special love*, which God bears to them all; admits them into one anothers bosomes, and to all the indearments, and pleasures of a *mutual communion.*

*Love to enemies*, *the expresse image of our heavenly Father*, by which we appear his children begotten of him; overcomes evil by goodness, blunts the double edge of revenge; at least the sharper edge, (which is alwayes towards the Author of it) secures our selves from wounding impressions, and resentments; turns keen anger, into gentle pity; and substitutes mild, pleasant forgiveness, in the room of the much uneasier thoughts, and study of retaliation.

*Mercifulnesse towards the distressed*, as our Father in Heaven is merciful, heaps blessings upon our Souls, and evidences our Title to what we are to live by the Divine mercy.

*An universal benignity, and propension to do good to all*; in imitation of the immense, diffusive goodnesse of God; is but kindnesse to our selves: Rewards it self by that greater pleasure is in giving, then in receiving; and associates us with God in the *blessedness* of this work, as well as in the disposition to it; who exercises loving kindnesse in the Earth, *because delighteth therein.*

Here

Here are ſome of ( the μιμήματα τῆς θείας ζωῆς, or ) the things wherein conſiſts that our conformity to the divine Nature and Will which is proper to our preſent ſtate. And now, who can eſtimate the bleſſedneſs of ſuch a ſoul? Can (in a word) the ſtate of that ſoul be unhappy? that is full of the Holy Goſt, full of Love, Joy, Peace, Long-ſuffering, Gentleneſs, Goodneſs, Faith, Meekneſs, Temperance, thoſe bleſſed fruits of that bleſſed Spirit. Bleſſedneſs is connaturalized unto this ſoul: Every thing doth its part, and all conſpire to make it happy. This ſoul is a *Temple* an habitation of holineſs: here dwells a Deity in his glory. 'Tis a Paradiſe, a Garden of God. Here he walks and converſes daily, delighted with its fragrant fruitfulneſs. He that hath thoſe things and aboundeth is not barren or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus: he is the Sun, and the knowledge of him, the quickening beams that cheriſh and ripen theſe fruits.

But the ſoul that lacketh theſe things is a Deſart, a habitation of Devils. Here is ſtupid, diſconſolate infidelity, inflexible obſtinacy, and reſolvedneſs for Hell; Hatred and contempt of the Sovereign Majeſty; whom yet, its ſecret miſgiving thoughts tell it, will be too hard for it at laſt. Here is ſwoln pride, and giddy vain-glory, diſguiſed hypocriſie, and pining envy, raging wrath, and ravenous avarice, with what you can imagine beſides, leading to miſery and deſolation.

You have then ſome proſpect of a happy temper

temper of Spirit. It can now be no difficulty to you, to frame an Idea of it in your thoughts, to get a *notional image*, (or this likeness, in the notion of it) into your minds: but that will avail you little, if you have not the *real image* also: that is, your Spirits really fashioned and formed according thereto. If having the knowledge of these things (as the Pagan morallists expression before mentioned is of vertuous Rules and Precepts) they become not *habitual to you, and your Spirits be not transfigured into them.*

*Philosophia dividitur in hæc Scientiam, & habitum animi, unam illam qui didicit & facienda ac vitanda percepit nondum sapiens est, nisi in ea quæ didicit animus ejus transfiguratus est.* Sen. (*ex Agrippâ*) Ep. 94.

But now, I treat with such as are supposed to have some such real impressions, that they may be stir'd up to endeavour a further perfecting of them. In order whereto I shall adde but this two-fold advice.

1. Be very careful that this *living Image* (such you have been formerly told it is) may *grow equally*, in every part. See that the impression of this likeness be *entire*; that it be not a maimed thing, if it be, God will never own it as his production. *Integrity* is the glory of a Christian: To be *entire lacking nothing*. This is the *soundness* of heart that excludes a blushing consciousness, and misgiving; exempts it from the fear of a *shameful discovery*. *Let my heart be sound in thy statutes*; is paraphrased, *by having respect to all Gods commandments*: To which is opposite, that being *partial in the Law* spoken of by the Prophet * by way of complaint concerning the Priests of that time. A thing hateful in the eye of God; and as uncomfortable to our selves, as to be without a Leg, or an Arm.

Psal. 119. 6. 80.

* Mal. 2. 9.

And

And ſee that it be preſerved entire by a *proportional*, and *uniform growth*, that freſh life and motion may daily appear in every Limb of this heavenly new Creature. How odious a deformity is it, when a *ſhew* of *moral vertues* excludes *Godlineſs*? And how much more odious (in as much as there is more impudent falſhood in it, and more of diſhonourable reflexion upon God) when under an high pretence of *Godlineſs*, any ſhall allow themſelves in viſible *immorality*? What, to be oppreſſive, envious, contentious, deceitful, proud, turbulent, wrathful, moroſe, malicious, fretful, and peeviſh, and yet a Chriſtian? What ſerious Perſon, that ſhall have no fairer repreſentation of Chriſtianity, than ſuch do give, would not be ready to ſay rather, *Sit anima mea cum Philoſophis*; If this be Chriſtian Religion, give me honeſt Paganiſm. A Chriſtian that hath received the proper, uniform, entire impreſſe of the Goſpel of Chriſt, is the moſt meek, mild, calm, harmleſs, quiet thing in the world. Never mention ſo venerable a name, if you will not be very jealous of the honour of it; will you give God occaſion to charge you? *Wretch I never had had this diſhonour, if thou hadſt never been call'd a Chriſtian; thou art a Chriſtian to no purpoſe, or to very bad; it does thee no good, and it injures me?*

But (which is more directly conſiderable as to our preſent purpoſe) the neglect and conſequent decay, of any gracious principle, infers a *languor*, a conſumption, and enfeeblement of all. Any ſuch perverſe diſpoſition

doth not affect that part only; is not onely an impairment to the contrary gracious principle, but (as a Cancer in some exteriour part of the body) it gradually creeps up till it invade vitals. Can the love of God live and grow in an unquiet, angry, uncharitable breast? Consider *Jam.* 1. 26. 1 *John* 3. 17.

2. Be constantly intent upon this business of spiritual growth. Mind it as a design, make a solemn purposed business of it, your great daily business; you do not till your ground by chance, as a casual thing; but you do it industriously, and of set purpose. The Apostle
Phil. 3. speaking of his own method of pursuing conformity to Christ, tells us, he did first, in comparison, count all things else loss and dogs meat;
8, 9, 10. he threw every thing else aside. Then next he recounts with himself *how far short he was. Not as if I had already attained*, &c. (where, by the way he intimates, that to stand still and give over further endeavours, implyes that grosse absurdity, as if we thought our selves to have attained already, to be already perfect; are we not ashamed to seem so conceited of our
V. 12, 13. selves?) and then *still, as he did attain in this pursuit, he forgot it not*; but held on his course with fresh and constant vigor, still reaching forth, and pressing onwards towards his designed mark.

In this great business we (alas) seem to dream. He that hath been observed ten or twenty years ago to be proud, and covetous, or passionate, still remains so, and we apprehend not the incongruity of it, What alwayes

learning

learning, and yet never come to the knowledge of the truth? as it is in Jesus to the putting off the old man, and putting on the new? who would meddle with any profession upon such tearms to be alwayes doing, and yet to do nothing? Surely it must be imputed to this, we design not; we do not seriously intend the perfecting of holiness, to make a real progress in our way and work, and to get still nearer heaven, as we draw nearer to the end of our dayes here on earth. We too contentedly confine our selves within certain limits, and aim not as we should, at a spiritual excellency. This is the temper of many that have long troden the path of (at least an external) Religion; they will go but their own pace, and that within a self-prescribed round or circle. They perform their stated task of Religious exercises, and shun the grosser vices of the time: and resolve never to go higher: Much like the character that was once given of a great man * that he *followed not the more eminent vertues, and yet that he hated vice.* And tis a true censure that a Barbarian * is said to have given of that middle temper, that dull indifferency. What is equally distant from being the matter, either of praise or punishments is upon no tearms to be accounted Vertue.

At least we drive not on a design of growth, and self improvement in our spiritual states with that constancy we ought; we are off, and on; our Spirits are not steadily intent. *We are unstable as water, how can we excel?* God hath not put us, sure, upon so fruitless a task,

* Tiberius *Neque enim continentes virtutes sectabatur, & rursum vitia oderat.* Tacit. Annal.

* Τ. Species. Παντὸς δὲ τιμᾶς τε, καὶ τιμωρίας ἴσον ἀφίστασθαι, ὅπου ἀρετὴ. *Philostr. in vit. Apollon. Tyan.*

Gen. 49. 4.

wherein our utmoſt labour and diligence ſhall profit nothing. Therefore ſtrive more vigorouſly, and pray with more earneſt importunity. Conſider, and plead it with God, that he hath ſet before thee the hope of ſuch a ſtate, when thou art to be perfectly like him; and ſhalt thou (that muſt hereafter be like God) be now like a clod of earth. Thou art now a Child begotten of him, and though thou art yet in thy minority, yet may not ſomewhat be ſpared out of ſo fair an eſtate, hereafter deſigned for thee; as that thou mayeſt now live worthy of ſuch a Father, and ſuitably to thy expected inheritance?

3. And now, a contented ſatisfied temper of Spirit, as I have told you, reſults from the other two; and will therefore follow of courſe, upon growing knowledge of God, and conformity to Him, as the latter of theſe alſo doth, upon the former. Yea, 'tis a part of our conformity to God; but a part conſequent to the impreſſion of the things mentioned under the former head (as knowledge alſo is a part previous and antecedent thereto) Tis in the ſtate of glory, we ſee ſomething ſuperadded. The *likeneſs* impreſt, is preſuppoſed; *Satisfaction* follows thereupon. The caſe is ſo too in our preſent ſtate, Contentment is ſpoken of as a thing conſequent and ſuperadded. *Godlineſs* with *Contentment*; a ſatisfied, contented Spirit, when 'tis the reſult of Godlineſs (of the divine image impreſt) is indeed great gain. Yet

As to this I ſhall only ſay theſe two things.

1. Be diſtinct and explicite in the propoſal of

of it as an end. Religion doth not brutify men but make them more rational. Its business is to guide them to blessedness. It must therefore pitch their eyes upon it, as the mark and end they are to aim at, and hold them intent there. 'Tis ingenuous, and honourable to God that we should expressly avow it, we come to Him for satisfaction to our Spirits, not knowing whether else to apply our selves. We turn our eyes upon Him, we lay open our souls to receive impressions from Him, for this very end. This is an explicit acknowledment of Him as God; our highest, Soveraign good.

2. Actually apply and accommodate divine visions and communications to this purpose. "Say, O my Soul; now come solace thy self "in this appearance of God; come take thy "allowed pleasure in such exertions of God as "thou dost now experience in thy self. Recount thy happiness; think how great it is; how rich thou art, on purpose that thy Spirit may grow more, daily, into a satisfied contented frame. Often bethink thy self, *What is the great God doing for me! that he thus reveals, and imparts himself to my soul; O how great things do those present pledges presignifie to me!* That thou may'st still more and more like thy portion, and account it faln in pleasant places, so as never to seek satisfaction in things of another kind; though thou must still continue expecting and desiring more of the same kind.

And remember to this purpose there cannot be a greater participation of the misery of hell before-hand, than *a discontented Spirit*

*perpetually reſtleſs, and weary of it ſelf*; nor of the bleſſedneſs of heaven, than *in a well-pleaſed, ſatisfied, contented frame of Spirit.*

## CHAP. XIX.

Rule 5. *Directing to raiſe our deſires above the* actual *or* poſſible *attainments of this our preſent; and terminate them upon the future conſummate ſtate of Bleſſedneſs. The Rule explained and preſſed by ſundry conſiderations.* Rule 6. *That we add to a deſirous purſuit, a joyful expectation of this bleſſedneſs; which is purſued in certain ſubordinate directions.*

*Rule* 5. 5. THat notwithſtanding all our preſent or poſſible attainments in this imperfect ſtate on earth; We direct fervent vigorous deſires towards the perfect, and conſummate ſtate of glory it ſelf; Not deſigning to our ſelves a plenary ſatisfaction, and reſt in any thing on this ſide of it.

That is; that *forgetting what is behind*, we reach forth not only to what is *immediately* before us; the next ſtep to be taken; but that our eye and deſire, aim forward at the ultimate period of our race terminate upon the eternal glory it ſelf; and that not only as a *meaſure*; according to which we would ſome way *proportion our preſent attainments*, but at the very *mark*, *which* (*it ſelf*) *we would fain hit and reach home to.* And

And that this be not only the *habitual bent, and tendency of our Spirits*; but that we keep up ſuch deſires, in *frequent* (and as much as is poſſible) *continual exerciſe*.

Yea, and that ſuch actual deſires be not only faint, and ſluggiſh wiſhes, but full of lively efficacy, and vigour; in ſome meaſure proportionable to our laſt end, and higheſt good; beyond, and above which we neither *eſteem*, nor *expect* any other enjoyment.

Whatſoever we may poſſibly attain to here, we ſhould ſtill be far from projecting to our ſelves a ſtate of *reſt* on this ſide *conſummate glory*; but ſtill urge our ſelves to a continual aſcent; ſo as to mount above, not onely all enjoyments of any other kind, but all degrees of enjoyment in this kind, that are beneath perfection.

Still it muſt be remembred, this is not the ſtate of our final reſt. The Maſs of Glory is yet in reſerve, we are not yet ſo high as the higheſt Heavens.

If we gain but the top of Mount *Tabor*, we are apt to ſay, *'tis good to be here*, and forget the longer journey yet before us; loath to think of a further advance; when, were our ſpirits right, how far ſo ever we may ſuppoſe our ſelves to have attained, it would be matter of continual joy to us to think high perfections are ſtill attainable; that we are yet capable of greater things; then what we have hitherto compaſt; our ſouls can yet comprehend more. Nature intends what is moſt perfect in every Creature; methinks the Divine

Nature in the New Creature, should not design lower, or cease aspiring, till it have attained its ultimate perfection, its culminating point; till Grace turn into Glory.

Let us therefore Christians bestir our selves, let us open, and turn our eyes upon the *eternal glory*. Lets view it well, and then demand of our own souls, why are our desires so faint and slothful? why do they so seldom pierce through the interveining distance, and reach home to what they professedly level at? so rarely touch this blessed mark? How can we forbear to be angry with our selves, that so glorious an end should not more powerfully attract? that our hearts should not more sensibly find themselves drawn? and all the powers of the soul beset on work, by the attractive power of that glory?

It certainly concerns us not to sit still, under so manifest a distemper. But if the *proposal* of the object; the *discourse* (all this while) of this blessed state, do not move us to make some further trials with our selves, see what urging and reasoning with our souls; what rubbing and chasing our hearts will do. And there is a two fold trial we may in this kind make upon our spirits. What the sense of *shame* will work with us, whether our hearts cannot be made sensible to suppose how *vile*, and wretched a temper it is *to be undesirous of glory*. And then what sense of *praise* can effect, or what impression it may make upon us to consider the *excellency*, and worth, the high reasonable-

ableneſs of that temper, & poſture of ſoul, which I am now perſwading to [ *a continual deſirouſneſs of that bleſſed glorious ſtate.* ]

1. As to the former. Let us bethink our ſelves, can we anſwer it to God, or to our own ſouls; that we ſhould indulge our ſelves in a continual negligence of our eternal bleſſedneſs? A bleſſedneſs, conſiſting in the Viſion, and Participation of the Divine Glory?

Have we been dreaming all this while, that God hath been revealing to us this glorious ſtate? and ſetting this lovely proſpect before our eyes? Did it become us not to open our eyes, while he was opening Heaven to us, and repreſenting the ſtate which he deſigned to bring us to? or will we ſay we have ſeen it, and yet deſire it not? Have we been deaf and dead, while he hath been calling us into eternal glory? have all our ſenſes been bound up all this while? Hath he been ſpeaking all along to ſenſleſs Statues, to Stocks, and Stones, while he expected reaſonable, living ſouls ſhould have received the voice, and have returned an obedient, complying anſwer? And what anſwer could be expected to ſuch a call, (a call to his Glory) below this, *We deſire it Lord, we would fain be there.*

And if, we ſay we have not been all this while aſleep, we ſaw the light that ſhone upon us, we heard the voice that called to us; wherewith ſhall we then excuſe our ſelves, that our deſires were not mov'd? that our Souls were not preſently in a flame? was it then that we

we thought all a meer fixion? that we durst not give credit to his word, when it brought us the report of the everlasting Glory? will we avow this? Is this that we will stand by? or what else have we left to say? have we a more plausible reason to alledge, that the discovery of such a glory mov'd us not to desire it; then that we believed it not? sure this is the truth of our case. We should feel this heavenly fire alwayes burning in our breasts, If our Infidelity did not quench the coal. If we did believe, we could not but desire. But doth not the thoughts of this shake our very souls, and fill us with horrour, and trembling? We that should be turn'd into indignation, and ready to burn our selves with our own flame, and all about us, if one should give us the lie; that we should dare to put the lye upon the *Eternal Truth*! upon him whose Word gave stability, and being to the world, who made and sustains all things by it. *That awful Word*! That Word that shivers Rocks, and melts down Mountains, that make the inanimate Creation tremble, that can in a moment blast all things, and dissolve the frame of Heaven and Earth, (which in the mean time it upholds) is that become with us fabulous, lying breath? Those God-breath'd Oracles, those Heavenly Records, which discover, and describe this blessed state, are they false and foolish Legends; must that be pretended at last (if men durst) that is so totally void of all pretence? what should be the gain or advantage accrewing to that Eternal, All-sufficient being. What

acces-

accession should be made to that infinite self-fulness by deluding a Worm? Were it consistent with his *Nature*, what could be his *design* to put a cheat upon poor mortal dust? If thou dare not impute it to *him*; such a deception had a beginning, but what Author canst thou imagine of it? or what end? did it proceed from a *good mind*, or a *bad*? could a good and honest mind form so horribly wicked a design, to impose an universal delusion, and lye upon the world, in the name of the true and holy God? or could a *wicked* mind frame a design so directly level'd against *wickedness*? or is there any thing so aptly and naturally tending to form the World to sobriety, holiness, purity of conversation, as the discovery of this future state of glory? and since the belief of future felicity, is known to obtain *universally* among men; who could be the Author of so *common* a deception. If thou had'st the mind to impose a lie upon all the world, what course would'st thou take? how would'st thou lay the design? or why dost thou in this case *imagine*, what thou knowest not how to *imagine*? And dost thou not without scruple believe many things of which thou never had'st so unquestionable evidence? or must *that Faith* which is the foundation of thy Religion, and eternal hopes be the most suspected shaking thing with thee? and have of all other the least stability, and rootedness in thy soul; If thou can'st not excuse thy *infidelity*, be ashamed of thy so cold, and sluggish desires of this glorious state.

And

And doth it not argue a low, sordid Spirit, not to desire and aim at the perfection thou art capable of? not to desire that blessedness which alone is suitable and satisfying to a reasonable and spiritual being? Bethink thy self a little, how low art thou sunk into the dirt of the earth? how art thou plunged into the miry Ditch? that even thine own clothes might abhor thee? Is the Father of Spirits thy Father? Is the world of Spirits thy Country? Hast thou any relation to that Heavenly Progeny? Art thou ally'd to that blessed Family? and yet undesirous of the same blessedness? Can'st thou savour nothing, but what smells of the Earth? Is nothing grateful to thy Soul, but what is corrupted by so vicious, and impure a tincture? are all thy delights centred in a Dunghill? and the polluted pleasures of a filthy world better to thee then the eternal visions and enjoyments of Heaven? what, art thou all made of Earth? Is thy soul stupified into a Clod? hast thou no sense with thee of any thing better and more excellent? can'st thou look upon no glorious thing with a pleased eye? Are things onely desirable and lovely to thee, as they are deformed? O consider the corrupted distempered state of thy Spirit; and how vile a disposition it hath contracted to it self. Thine looks too like the *Mundane Spirit*. The *Spirit of the World*. The Apostle speaks of it (*τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ κόσμου*) by way of distinction; we have not received the Spirit of the world, but the Spirit that is from God, that we might know, or see (and no doubt 'tis desire that

1 Cor. 2. 12. ἐκ θεοῦ.

anim ates

animates that eye; 'tis not bare speculative intuition, and no more) the things freely given us of God. Surely he whose desire doth not guide his eye to the beholding of those things, hath received the Spirit of the world onely. A Spirit that conforms him to this world, makes him think onely thoughts of this world, and drive the designs of this world, and speak the language of this world. A Spirit that connaturalizes him to the world, makes him of a temper suitable to it. He breathes onely worldly breath, carries a worldly aspect, is of a worldly conversation. O poor low spirit! that such a world should with-hold thee from the desire, and pursuit of such glory! Art thou not ashamed to think what thy desires are wont to pitch upon, while they decline and wave this blessedness? Methinks thy very shame should compel thee to quit the name of a *Saint*, or a *Man*. To forbear numbring thy self with any that pretend to immortality; and go seek Pasture among the Beasts of the Field, with them that live that low animal life, that thou dost, and expect no other.

And while thou so fallest in with the world, how highly dost thou gratifie the pretending, and usurping God of it? The great fomentor of the sensual worldy genius; *The Spirit it self that works in the children of disobedience*, and makes them follow the course of the world; hold them fast bound in worldly lusts, *and leaves them captive at his will*; causes them (after his own Serpentine manner) to creep, and crawl in the dust of the Earth. He is most Ephes. 2. 2, 3.

inti-

intimate to this apoſtate world, informs it (as it were) and actuates it in every part; is even one great ſoul to it. *The whole world lies in that wicked one* (as the body, by beſt Philoſophers, is ſaid to be in the Soul.) The world is ſaid to be *convicted*, when *he* is judged. He having fall'n from a ſtate of bleſſedneſs in God, hath involv'd the world with himſelf in the ſame Apoſtacy and Condemnation; and labours to keep them faſt in the bands of death. The great Redeemer of Souls makes this his buſineſs, *to loſe, and diſſolve the work of the Devil.* With that wicked one thou complyeſt againſt thy own Soul, and the Redeemer of it; while thou neglecteſt to deſire and purſue thy bleſſedneſs. This is thy debaſement, and his triumph; thy vile ſuccumbency gives him the day, and his will upon thee. He deſires no more, then that he may ſuppreſs in thee all heavenly deſires; and keep thee thus a ſlave, and a priſoner (confin'd in thy Spirit to this low, dark dungeon) by thy own conſent. While thou remaineſt without deſire after Heaven, he is ſecure of thee, as knowing then thou wilt take no other way, but what will bring thee unto the ſame eternal ſtate with himſelf in the end. He is jealous over thee, that thou direct not a deſire, nor glance an eye Heaven-ward: while thou doſt not ſo, thou art entirely ſubject, and giveſt as full obedience to him; as thy God requires to himſelf, in order to thy bleſſedneſs. But is it a thing tollerable to thy thoughts, that thou ſhould'ſt yeild that heart obedience to the Devil againſt God? And

1 Joh. 5. 19.

Joh. 16.

1 Joh. 3. 8.

And this being the ſtate of thy caſe, what more ſignificant expreſſion canſt thou make of thy contempt of Divine goodneſs? O the love that thou neglecteſt, while the moſt glorious iſſue, and product of it, is with thee an undeſired thing! Yea, this the thing it ſelf ſpeaks, were there no ſuch competition. What? that when eternal love have conceived, and is travelling to bring forth ſuch a birth? that when it invites thee to an expectation of ſuch glory ſhortly to be reveal'd, the reſult of ſo deep counſels, and wonderful works, this ſhould be the return from thee, I deſire it not? Is this thy gratitude to the Father of Glory? the requital of the kindneſs, yea, and of the blood of thy Redeemer? If this bleſſedneſs were not deſirable for it ſelf; methinks the offerers hand ſhould be a ſufficient endearment. But thou can'ſt not ſo deride or abſtract, it conſiſts in beholding, and bearing his Glorious likeneſs, who invites thee to it, and therefore in the neglect of it, thou moſt highly affronteſt him.

Yea further, is it not a monſtrous unnaturalneſs towards thy ſelf, as well as impiety towards God, not to deſire that perfect, final bleſſedneſs? Doth not every thing naturally tend to its ultimate perfection and proper end? what creature would not witneſs againſt thee, if thou neglect, in thy own capacity and kind, to aim at thine? Surely thou canſt not allow thy ſelf to think any thing beneath *this*, worthy to be owned by thee, under that notion, of thy higheſt good, and thy laſt end. But that thy

Spirit

Spirit should labour under an aversion towards thy highest good, towards thy blessednes it self, is not that a dismal token upon thee? If thou did'st disaffect, and nauseate the things in which thy present life is bound up, and without which thou can'st not live, would'st thou not think thy case deplorate? what dost thou think will become of thy soul? whose everlasting life is bound up in that very good, which thou *desirest not*. Which cannot live that life without that good, nor with it, if thou hast no desire to it. O the Eternal Resentments, thy Soul will have of this cruelty. To be withheld from that, wherein its life lies? would'st thou not judge him unnatural, that should kill his Brother, assassine his Father, starve his Child? what shall be said of him that destroys himself? How may that soul lament, that ever it was thine; and say, O that I had rather been of any such lower kind, to have animated a Fly, to have inspirited a vile Worm, rather then to have serv'd a reasonable beast, that, by me, knew the good it would never follow, and did not desire! But if thou hast any such desires, in a low degree, after this blessednes; as thou thinkest may intitle thee to the name thou beareſt, of a *Saint*, a *Christian*. Is it not still very unnatural to pursue a *good* approved, by thy stated judgment, as *best in it self*, and *for* thee, with so unproportionable, so slothful desires? For the same reason thou dost desire it at all; thou should'st desire it *much*, yea, and still more, and more, till thou attain it, and be swallowed up into it. Thy *best*, and *last good*, thou can'st never desire too much.

And

And let it be conſidered by thee, that the temper thou thinkeſt thy ſelf innocent of [ an habitual prevalent diſaffection to the true bleſſedneſs of Saints ] may, *for ought thou knowſt*, be upon thee; while it *appears*, thou art ſo very near the borders of it; and *it appears not*, with ſuch certainty, that thou partakeſt not in it. It is not ſo eaſie a matter, critically to diſtinguiſh, and conclude of the loweſt degree (*in Hypotheſi*, or with application to thy own caſe) of that deſire, which is neceſſary to qualifie thee for the *enjoyment* of this bleſſedneſs. And is it not a matter both of ſhame, and terrour, that thou ſhould'ſt deſire *thy bleſſedneſs* ſo faintly, as not to know, whether thou truly deſire it at all? 'Tis true, that a certainty, amongſt ſuch as may be ſincere, is very little common; but whence proceeds it, but from their too common indulged ſloth; out of which all this is deſigned to awaken thee. And the commonneſs whereof doth as little detract from the reproach, and *ſinfulneſs*, as from the danger of it? 'tis but a poor defence, for what is *intrinſically evil* in it ſelf, that it is *common*.

But further, as the caſe is, this is ſo reproachful a thing, even in common eſtimate, [ not to deſire Heaven, and Eternal Glory, or to deſire it with very cold and careleſs deſires ] that there are few will profeſs it, or own it to be their temper, much fewer that will undertake to excuſe, or juſtifie it. 'Tis ſo evilly thought of, that among meerly ſober & rational men, it can never find an advocate, or any that will afford it Patronage. The generality pre-

tend a desire of going to Heaven, and being with God. If any be so observant of themselves, as to know, and so ingenious, as to confess it, otherwise with them, they complain of it as their fault, and say, they would fain have it redrest, but are far from assuming that confidence to defend, or plead for it. Consider then, wilt thou persist in such a temper and disposition of mind, as all men condemn? and be guilty of so odious a thing, as shall be censured & blamed by the common concurrent vote and judgment of mankind? Thou would'st be ashamed to stand forth, and profess openly to men, that thou desirest an earthly felicity more then a blessedness in Heaven: or at least, that thou art so indifferent, and the scales hang even with thee, that thou canst hardly tell which way they incline most. And art thou not ashamed that this should be thy usual temper, how much soever thou conceal it from the notice, and observation of the world?

Moreover, how can it escape thy serious reflection? that if thou pretend it otherwise with thee, 'tis but to adde one sin to another, and cover thy Carnality with Hypocrisie, and Dissimulation? yea, while thou continuest in that temper of Spirit, not to desire this blessedness as thy Supreme end, the whole of thy Religion is but an empty shew, an artificial disguise, it carries an appearance and pretence, as if thou wast aiming at God and Glory, while thy heart is set another way, and the bent of thy soul secretly carries thee a counter-course. Hath not *Religion* an aspect towards *Blessedness*?

what mean thy Praying, thy Hearing, thy Sacramental Communion; if thou have not a design for Eternal Glory? what makest thou in this *way*, if thou have not thy heart set towards this *end*?

Nor is it more dishonest and unjust; then it is foolish and absurd, that the disposition, and tendency of thy soul, should be directly contrary to the only design of the Religion thou professest, and doest externally practice. Thy profession and practice are nothing but self-contradiction. Thou art continually running counter to thy self; outwardly pursuing what thou inwardly declinest. Thy real end (which can be no other then what thou *really desirest*, and settest thy heart upon) and thy visibly way are quite contrary. So that while thou continuest the course of Religion, in which thou art engaged, having taken down from before thine eyes, the end which thou should'st be aiming at, and which alone Religion can aptly subserve; Thy Religion hath no design, or end at all (none at least which thou would'st not be ashamed to profess and own.) Indeed this temper of heart I am now pleading against, an *undesirousness*, or *indifferencie of Spirit* towards the eternal glory, renders Religion the vainest thing in the world. For whereas all the other actions of our lives have their stated proper ends; Religion hath in this case none at all; none to which it hath any designation in its nature, or any aptness to subserve. This monstrous absurdity it infers (and how strange is it, that it should not be reflected on!) That,

whereas, if you ask any man of common underſtanding *what he doth this or that action for?* eſpecially, if they be *ſtated actions* done by him in an ordinary courſe, he can readily tell you for ſuch and ſuch an end. But ask him why he continues any practice of Religion; he cannot ſay (in this caſe) for what.

For can any man imagine what other end Religion naturally ſerves for, but to bring men to bleſſedneſs? which being no other thing then what hath been here deſcribed, ſuch, as are found not to deſire it really, and Supremely, as their end, can have no *real attainable end* of their being religious at all. To drive on a continued courſe, and ſeries of actions, in a viſible purſuit of that which they deſire not; and have no mind to, *is* ſuch a piece of folly, ſo fond and vain a trifling; that, as I remember, *Cicero* reports, *Cato* to have ſaid concerning the South-ſayers of his time, *he did wonder they could look in one anothers faces, and not laugh* (being conſcious to each others impoſtures, and the vanity of their profeſſion) ſo one would as juſtly wander, that the generality of carnal men (who may ſhrewdly gueſs at the temper of one anothers minds) do not laugh at each other, that they are joyntly engaged in ſuch exerciſes of Religion, to the deſign whereof the common and agreed temper of their Spirits do ſo little correſpond. As if all were in very good earneſt for Heaven, when each one knows for himſelf, and may (poſſibly with more *Truth* then *Charity*) ſuppoſe of the reſt, that if they might

always

alwayes continue in their earthly ſtations; they had rather never come there. And therefore that they deſire it not *Supremely*, and ſo not as their end at all; conſider it then, that thy no-deſire of this bleſſed ſtate quite diſpirits thy Religion, utterly raviſhes away its Soul, leaves it a dead, fooliſh, vain thing, renders it an *idle impertinency*, not a *mean* to a valuable end. *This deſire* is that life of Religion, all duties and exerciſes of piety are without it, but empty Formalities, Solemn pieces of Pageantrie. Every ſervice done to God, but the *Sacrifice of a Fool*, if not animated by the deſire of final bleſſedneſs in him and be not part of our way thither, a means deſigned to the attainment of it. Which nothing can be, that we are not put upon by the vertue of the *deſired end*. Without this, Religion is not it ſelf. A continuance in well doing, is as it were the body of it; and therein, *a ſeeking honor, glory, and immortality*, the Soul and Spirit. *The deſire* of an *Heavenly Country*, muſt run through the whole courſe of our *Earthly Pilgrimage*: It were otherwiſe a continued errour, an uncertain wandring; no ſteady tending towards our end. So that thou art a meer Vagrant, if this *deſire* do not direct thy courſe towards thy Fathers houſe. And methinks all this ſhould make thee even *aſhamed* of thy ſelf, if thou canſt not find this deſire to have a ſettled reſidence and a ruling power in thy Soul. then.

2. *Senſe of praiſe* ſhould ſignifie ſomething too, as the Apoſtle, *Whatſoever things are*

*pure, lovely, &c. if there be any virtue,— any praiſe, think of theſe things.* And hath not the eternal glory thoſe characters upon it of *purity*, and *loveliness* beyond all things? Is it not a *laudable*, and *praiſe-worthy* thing to have a mind and heart ſet upon *that*?

Heb. 11. 16. The bleſſed God puts a note of excellency upon this temper of Spirit. But they deſire a better Country, that is, an Heavenly, *Wherefore God is not aſhamed to be called their God, &c.* This renders them a people *worthy of*

1 Theſ. 2. 12. *him, who hath called them to his kingdom and glory*; fit for him to own a relation to. Had they been of low, terrene Spirits, he would have accounted it a ſhame to him, to have gone under the name and cogniſance of their God. But in as much as they deſire the Heavenly Country, have learned to trample this terreſtrial world, cannot be contained within this lower Sphere; nor ſatisfie themſelves in earthly things; they now diſcover a *certain excellency of Spirit*, in reſpect whereof God is not aſhamed to own a relation to them before all the world to be called their God; to let men ſee what account he makes of ſuch a Spirit.

Yea, this is the proper genuine Spirit, and temper of a Saint, which agrees to him as he is ſuch. He is begotten to the eternal inheritance. A diſpoſition (and therein a deſire) to it, is in his very nature (the new nature he hath received) implanted there, from his original. He is born Spirit of Spirit, and by that birth, is not intituled onely, but *adopted*, and ſuited

suited also to that pure and Spiritual state of blessednes. That grace by the appearance whereof men are made Christians teaches, also instructs, unto this very thing, to look for this blessed hope the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.. That which you know consummates that blessednes. For when Christ, who is their life shall appear then shall they also appear with him in glory, by the participation of the divine nature their Spirits escape and get up above this corrupt impure world. That new nature is a holy flame that carries their hearts upwards towards heaven.

Further *such desires* appear hence to be of *divine originall* an infusion from the blessed God himself. That nature is from him immediately in which they are implanted. The Apostle speaking of his earnest panting desire to have mortality swallowed up of life presently add's. He that *wrought us to the self same thing is God.* 2 Cor. 5 4

They are *obedient desires*, The souls present *answere* to the heavenly call, by which God calls it to his kingdom and glory. This glory is (as hath been formerly noted) the very term of that calling. The God of all grace hath called us into his eternal glory by Christ Jesus. The glorified state is the marke, the price of the high calling of God in Christ. Tis the matter of the Apostles thanksgiving unto God, on the behalf of the Thessalonians, that they were called by his Gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ Heb. 3 1. 1 Thes. 5. 12. 1 Pet. 5. 10 Phil. 3 14. 2 Thes. 2. 14

when the soul desires this glory, it obediently answers this call. This is a complyance and subjection of heart to it. How Lovely and becoming a thing is this, when God touches the heart with a stamp and impress of glory, and it forthwith turnes it self to that very point, and stands directly bent towards the state of glory, if not wayward or perverse, but here in yield it self to God, and complyes with the divine pleasure.

Such desires have much in them of a child-like ingenuity. To desire the sight of a *Fathers face*; when this is this intimate sense of the soul show me the Father and it suffices; To desire the fullest conformity to his nature and will, to be perfect as that heavenly Father is perfect, what doth better become a child?

They are generous desires, they aim at perfection, the highest that created nature is capable of, not contented to have had some glances of divine glory, some stroaks and lines of his image, but aspiring to full-eyd visions a perfect likeness.

They are victorious desires, they (as it were) ride in triumph over the world and every sublunarie thing, they must be supposed to have conquered sensual inclinations to have got the mastery over terrene dispositions and affections. With what holy contempt and scorn of every earthly thing doth that loftie soul quit this dirty world and ascend, that is powerfully carryed by its own desire towards that blessed state? The desire of such a knowledge of Christ

Christ, as might transform into his Likeness, and pass the soul through all degrees of conformity to him, till it attain the resurrection of the dead, and become like a risen glorified Jesus; Such a desire I say, if it make all things seem as loss and dung in comparison (even a formal Spirit less religion it self) will it not render this world the most despicable dunghill of all the rest. Try such a soul if you can, tempt it down to injoy a *flattering kind world*, or to please it when *angry and unkind*. When desires after this glory are once awakn'd, into an active lively vigour, when the fire is kindled, and the flame ascends and this refined Spirit is joyfully ascending therein; see if you can draw it back and make it believe this world a more regardable thing. Why should not all those considerations make thee in love with this blessed frame of Spirit, and restless till thou find thy self uncapable of being satisfied with any thing but divine likeness,

6. *That while we cannot as yet attain the mark and end of our desires, we yild not to a comfortless despondency in the way, but maintain in our hearts a lively joy, in the hope that hereafter we shall attain it.* Rule 6.

We are not all this while perswading to the desire and pursuit of an unattainable good. Spiritual desires are also rational and do therefore involve hope with them; and that hope ought to *infer* and *cherish* joy. Hopeless desire is full of torment, and must needs banish joy from that breast which it hath not the possession

session of. Tis a disconsolate thing to desire what we must never expect to enjoy, and are utterly unlikely ever to compass. But these desires are part of the *new creature*, which is not of such a composition, as to have a principle of endless trouble, and disquiet in it self, The Father of mercies is not so little merciful to his own child; to lay it under a necessity *from its very natural constitution*, of being for ever miserable by the desire of that which it can never have. It had been very unlike the workmanship of God, to make a creature to which it should be *necessarie to desire, and impossible to enjoy* the same thing.

Not but as he hath given holy souls (as to the present case) great *incentives* of desire, so doth he afford them proportionable *encouragements* of hope also, and that hope intervening, can very well reconcile desire and joy and lodge them together in the same bosome. So that as it is a thing capable of no excuse, to hear of this blessedness, and not desire it, so it would be to desire, and not expect it, to expect it, and not rejoyce in it, even while we are under that expectation. And it must be a very raised joy that shall answer to the expectation of so great things. If one should give a stranger to Christianity an account of the Christian hopes, and tell him what they expect to be and enjoy erelong; he would sure promise himself to find so many angells dwelling in humane flesh, and reckon, when he came among them, he should be as amidst heavenly Quire: every one ful of joy and praise. He would

would expect to find us living on *earth*, as the inhabitants of *heaven*, alſo many pieces of immortal glory lately dropt down from above, and ſhortly again returning thither. He would look to find, every where, in the Chriſtian world incarnate glory, ſparkling through the overſhaddowing vail, and wonder how this earthly ſphere ſhould be able to contain ſo many great ſouls.

But when he draws nearer to us, and obſerves the courſe and carriage of our lives when he ſees us walk as other men, and conſiders the ſtrange diſagreement of our daily converſation, to our ſo great avowed hopes, and how little ſenſe of joy, and pleaſure we diſcover our ſelves to conceive in them: would he not be ready to ſay, ſure ſome or other ("willing only "to amuſe the world with the noiſe of ſtrange "things) have compoſed a Religion for theſe "men, which they themſelves underſtand no-"thing of. If they do adopt, and own it for "theirs, they underſtand not their own pre-"tences; they are taught to ſpeak ſom big words, "or to give a faint, or ſeeming aſſent to ſuch "as ſpeak them in the names; but tis im-"poſſible they ſhould be in good earneſt, or "believe themſelves in what they ſay, and "profeſs.

And what reply then ſhould we be able to make? for who can think that any who acknowledge a God, and underſtand at all what that name imports, ſhould value at ſo low a rate, as we (viſibly) do; the eternal fruition of his glory, and a preſent Sonſhip to

to him, the pledge of so great an hope.

He that is born Heir to great Honours, and Possessions, though he be upon great uncertainties, as to the enjoyment of them (for how many interveniencies may prevent him?) yet when he comes to understand his possibilities, and expectancies; how big doth he look and speak? what grandieur doth he put on? His hopes form his Spirit and Deportment; But is it Proportionably so with us? Do our hopes fill our hearts with joy, our mouths with praise, and clothe our faces with a cheerful aspect, and make an holy alacrity appear in all our conversations?

But let not the design of this discourse be mistaken. 'Tis not a presumptuous confidence I would encourage, nor a vain ostentation, nor a disdainful overlooking of others when we fancie our selves to excel. Such things hold no proportion with a Christian Spirit. *His* is a modest, humble exaltation, a serious severe joy; suitable to his solid, stable hope. His Spirit is not puft up, and swol'n with air, 'tis not big by an inflation, or a light and windy humour; but 'tis really fill'd with effectual pre-apprehensions of a weighty glory. His joy accordingly exerts it self with a steady lively vigour, equally removed from vain lightness, and stupidity from conceitedness, and insensibleness of his blessed state. He forgets not that he is less then the least of Gods mercies, but disowns not his title to the greatest of them. He abases himself to the dust, in the sense of his own vileness; but in the admiration of Divine Grace, he

he riſes as high as Heaven. In his humiliation he affects to equal himſelf with worms, in his joy and praiſe with angels. He is never unwilling to diminiſh himſelf, but affraid of detracting any thing from the love of God, or the iſſues of that love.

But moſt of all he magnifies (as he hath cauſe) this its laſt and moſt perfect iſſue. And by how much he apprehends his own unworthineſs, he is the more rapt up into a wondering joy; that ſuch bleſſedneſs ſhould be his deſigned portion.

But now how little do we find in our ſelves of this bleſſed frame of ſpirit? How remote are we from it? Let us but enquire a little into our own Souls. Are there not too apparent Symptomes with us of the little joy we take in the forethoughts of future bleſſedneſs? For,

Firſt, How few thoughts have we of it? what any delight in, they remember often. 'Tis ſaid of the ſame perſon, that his *delight is in the Law of the Lord, and that in his Law he doth meditate day and night.* And when the Pſalmiſt profeſſes his own *delight in Gods ſtatutes*, he adds, *I will not forget thy Word.* Should we not be as unapt to *forget* Heaven, if our *delights* were there? But do not dayes paſs with us, wherein we can allow our ſelves no leaſure to mind the eternal glory? when yet vanities throng in upon us, without any obſtruction, or check? Pſal. 1. 2. Pſal. 119. 16.

And (what is conſequent hereupon) How ſeldom is this bleſſed ſtate the ſubject of our diſcourſe? How often do Chriſtians meet, and

and not a word of Heaven? O heavy carnal hearts! Our home and eternal blessedness, in this, appears to be forgotten among us. How often may a person converse with us e're he understand our relation to the Heavenly Country? If Exiles meet in a Forraign Land, what pleasant discourse have they of home? They suffer not one another to forget it. Such was *their remembrance of Sion*, who sate together bemoaning themselves by the Rivers of *Babylon, a making mention of it* (as the Phrase is often used.) And methinks (even as to this remembrance) it should be our common resolution too, *If we forget thee, O Jerusalem; If we forget to make mention of thee, O thou City of the living God; Let our right hand forget her cunning, our tongue shall sooner cleave to the roof of our mouth*; and so it would be, did we prefer that Heavenly Jerusalem above our *chief joy*.

Again, how little doth it weigh with us? It serves not to out-weigh the smallest trouble, if we have not our eternal desire in every thing gratified, if any thing fall out crosto our inclinations, this glory goes for nothing with us. Our discontents swallow up our hopes, and joyes, and heaven is reckon'd as a thing of naught. If when *outward* troubles afflict, or threaten us, we could have the certain prospect of better dayes; *that* would *sensibly revive*, and please us. Yea, can we not please our selves with very uncertain groundless hopes of this kind, without promise or valuable reason? But to be told of a recompense, at the resurrection of the just, of a day when we shall see the face of God

God, and be satisfied, with his Likeness; this is insipid and without savor to us: and affords us but cold comfort. The uncertain things of time signifie more with us, then the certain things of eternity. Can we think tis all this while well with us? can we think this a tollerable evil, or suffer, with patience, such a distemper of Spirit? Methinks it should make us ever weary of our selves, and solicitous for an effectual speedy redress.

The redress must be more in our *own doing* (striving with our souls and with God for them) then in what *any man can say*. Most of the considerations under the foregoing rule are with little variation applicable to this present purpose. I shall here annex only some few subordinate directions; which may lead us into this blessed state of life, and give us some joyful foretasts of the future blessedness, according as our spirits shall comply with them. But expect not to be cured by prescriptions without using them: or that heavenly joy can be the creature of mortal unregarded breath; we can onely prescribe means, and methods through which God may be pleased to descend, and in which thou art diligently to insist and wait. And because I cannot well suppose the ignorant where much is said to this purpose; I shall therefore say little.

1. *Possess thy soul with the apprehension that thou art not at liberty in this matter*; but that there is a certain *spiritual delectation*, which is incumbent on thee as indispensable duty. Some whose morofer tempers do more estrange them

them from delights, think themselves more especially concern'd, to banish every thing of that kind from their religion and phansie it onely to consist in sowr and rigorous severities. Others seem to think it arbitrary and indifferent; or that, if they live in a continual sadness and dejection of spirit, 'tis only their infelicity not their fault, and apprehend not the obligation that is upon them, by a divine Law otherwise to mannage and order their spirits. But what then? are such words thought to be spoken at random, *Her ways are ways of pleasantness. The Lord is the portion of mine Inheritance. The Lines are fal'n to me in pleasant places* (or in the midst of pleasantnesses, as the expression hath been noted to signifie) Do such precepts carry no sense with them: *Delight thy self in the Lord.--Rejoyce in the Lord always and again I say rejoyce*, with many more? Do all passages of this kind in Scripture stand for cyphers or were they put in them by chance? Is there such a thing as an aptitude to delectation in our *natures*, and doth the *Sanctification* thereof intitle the joy of Saints to a place among the fruits of the Spirit, and yet is the exercise of it to have no place in their hearts and practise? Do not think you are permitted so to extinguish or frustrate so considerable a principle of the Divine Life. Know that the due exercise of it, is a part of the order and discipline of Gods Family. That it is a constitution of the divine Goodness and Wisdom both to cherish his *own*, and invite in strangers to him, yea that is the scope and aim of the whole Gospel

Prov. 3. 17.

Psal. 34. 7.
Phil. 4 4.

Sal. 5. 22.

Goſpel-revelation, that the word of life was purpoſely written to draw ſouls into fellowſhip with the Father and the Son that their *joy might be full.* That the **M**inſters of this Goſpel are therefore ſtiled the helpers of their *joy.* Therefore though here it be not required nor allowed, that you ſhould indulge a vain trifling levity or a ſenſual joy, or that you ſhould rejoyce you know not why (imitating the laughter of a fool) or inopportunely, why your *State* admits it not, or when the Lord *calls to mourning*; yet ſettle however this perſwaſion in your hearts, that the ſerious, rational, regular, ſeaſonable exerciſe of delight and joy is matter of duty, to be charged upon conſcience, from the authority of God; and is an integral part in the religion of Chriſtians. And then ſure you will not think any object more proper and ſuitable for it to be exerciſed upon, than the foreſeen ſtate of bleſſedneſs, which is, in it ſelf, *a fulneſs of joy*; *The joy of our Lord.* and is in the pre-apprehenſions of it a more conſiderable matter of joy than our preſent ſtate affords us beſides; and without relation whereto we have no matter of rational joy at all. 2 Cor. 4. . Pſalm. 16. Mat. 25.

2. *Keep Faith in exerciſe*; Both in that *act* of it, which *perſwades* the ſoul of the truth of the Goſpel-revelation, and that act of it which *unites* it to God, through the mediator. The Apoſtle prays on the behalf of his Roman Chriſtians that they might be filled with joy and peace, *in believing*; and we Rom. 15 1.

are told how effectually (as to this) it ſupply'd the place of ſight. Such as had not ſeen Chriſt (which was the priviledge of many other Chriſtians of that time) yet *believing* 1 Pet. 1. 8. did rejoyce, with *joy unſpeakable and glorious.*

Faith directly tends, in that double office before mentioned, to excite and foment this joy. As it aſſents to the truth of the Goſpel-revelation it reallizes the object, is the ſubſtance and evidence of the inviſible glory. Heb. 11. 1. As it unites the ſoul with God through Chriſt in a *fiducial* and *obediential* cloſure, it aſcertains our intereſt therein, and is our actual acceptance of our bleſſedneſs it ſelf; for when we take God through Chriſt to be our God, what is it? but to accept him as our eternal and ſatisfying portion, whom we are after fully to enjoy in the viſion and participation of his glorious excellencies, and infinite fulneſs. Which two acts of faith we have mentioned together in one text.--They were *perſwaded* of the promiſes and *embraced* them; the former reſpecting the *truth* of the promiſe, the latter the *goodneſs* of the thing promiſed. And hereupon they confeſſed themſelves (as it follows) Pilgrims and Strangers on earth which abdication of the earth, as none of their country could not be, but that, through their faith, they had a joyous pre-apprehenſion of that better ſtate. That confeſſion did manifeſtly involve in it a lively joy, ſpringing from the ſight and embrace of that more taking diſtant good; which the promiſe preſented them with; whence they

they could not think it enough to be ſuch to themſelves in their own thoughts, and the temper of their minds; but they cannot forbear (ſo overcoming were their ſights and taſts) to give it out, to ſpeak, and look, and live, as thoſe that were carried up in their ſpirits above this earth; and who did even diſdain to own themſelves in any other relation to it, then that of Forraigners and Strangers.

Set thy Faith on work ſoul, and keep it a work, and thou wilt find this no riddle; it will be ſo with thee too, we have much talk of Faith among us, and have the name often in our mouths, but how few are the real lively believers? Is it to be thought that ſuch bleſſedneſs ſhould not more affect our hearts, nay would it not raviſh away our very ſouls, did we throughly believe it? And were it our preſent daily work to renew the bonds of a vital union with the bleſſed God, in whom we expect to be bleſſed forever, could that be without previous guſts of pleaſure? Tis not talking of faith but living by it, that will give us the experience of heavenly delights and joyes.

3. *Take heed of going, in thy practice, againſt thy light, of perſiſting* in a courſe of known, or ſuſpected ſin, that ſtates thee in a direct hoſtility and rebellion againſt heaven; and can never ſuffer thee to think of eternity and the other world with comfort, will fill thy mind with frightful apprehenſions of God, render the ſight of his face, the moſt terrible thing to thy thoughts, thou canſt imagine; and ſatisfaction with his likeneſs the moſt im-

poſſible thing. Let a good underſtanding and correſpondence be continued between God and thee (which is not poſſible, if thou diſobeyeſt the dictates of thy conſcience and takeſt the liberty to do what thou judgeſt God hath forbidden thee) *that this may be thy rejoycing the teſtimony of a good conſcience; that in ſimplicity, and godly ſincerity, not according to fleſhly wiſdom, but the grace of God thou haſt had thy converſation*--. Take God for a witneſs of thy ways and walking; approve thy ſelf to his jealous eye, ſtudy to carry thy ſelf acceptably towards him; and unto all well pleaſing. Let that be thy ambition to ſtand right in his thoughts to appear gracious in his eyes. Hold faſt thine integrity, that thy heart may not reproach thee as long as thou liveſt, If iniquity be in thy hand put it away, then ſhalt thou lift up thy face without ſpot and without fear. Be a faithful ſubject of that kingdom of God (and here conſcience rules under him) which conſiſts *firſt in righteouſneſs*, and then in peace, and *joy in the holy Ghoſt*. Thou wilt ſo daily behold the face of God in righteouſneſs, and with pleaſure, but wilt moſt of all pleaſe thy ſelf to think of thy final appearance before him, and the bleſſedneſs that ſhall enſue.

2 Cor. 1. 12.

4. *Watch and arm thy ſelf againſt the too forcible ſtrokes and impreſſions of ſenſible objects* Let not the favor of ſuch low vile things corrupt the pallate of thy ſoul. A ſenſual earthly mind, and heart, cannot taſt heavenly delights. *They that are after the fleſh do ſavor the things of the Fleſh, they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.* Labor to be throughly

throughly mortified towards this world, and the preſent ſtate of things. Look upon this ſcheme & pageant as paſſing away, keep natural appetites under reſtraint (the world and the luſts of it paſs away together) ſenſuality is an impure thing. Heavenly refined joy cannot live amid'ſt ſo much filth. Yea, and if thou give thy fleſh liberty too far in things that are (*in ſpecie*;) lawful; it will ſoon get advantage to domineer, and keep thy ſoul in a depreſſing ſervitude. Abridge it then, and cut it ſhort; That thy mind may be enlarged, and at liberty; may not be throng'd, and prepoſſeſt with carnal imaginations and affections. "Let thy ſoul (if thou wilt take this "inſtruction from a Heathen) look with a "conſtant erect mind into the undefiled "light, neither darkened, nor born down "towards the Earth; but ſtopping its Ears, "and turning its Eyes, and all other Senſes "back upon it ſelf; and quite aboliſhing out "of it ſelf, all Earthly Sighs, and Groans, "and Pleaſures, and Glories, and Honours, "and diſgrace; and having forſaken all "theſe; chooſe for the Guides of its way, "true Reaſon, and ſtrong Love, the one "whereof will ſhew it the way, the other "make it eaſie, and pleaſant.

1 Cor. 7 31. 1 Joh. 2 17.

*Max. Tyr. in diſſert.* 7. Θεὸς κατὰ πάντων.

5. *Having voided thy mind of what is earthly, and carnal, apply and turn it to this bleſſed Theam.* The moſt excellent and the vileſt objects are alike to thee, while thou mindeſt them not. Thy thoughts poſſibly bring thee in nothing but vexation and trouble, which would bring in

assoon joy, and pleasure, didst thou turn them to proper objects. A thought of the heavenly glory is assoon thought as of an earthly Cross. We complain the world troubles us, then what do we there? why get we not up in our spirits into the quieter Region? what trouble would the thoughts of future glory be to us? How are the thoughts and wits set on work for this flesh? but we would have our Souls flourish, as the Lilies, without any thing of their own care. Yea, we make them toyl for torture, and not for joy, revolve an affliction a thousand times, before, and after it comes; and have never done with it, when eternal blessedness gains not a thought.

6. *Plead earnestly with God for his Spirit. This is joy in the Holy Ghost*; or whereof he is the Author. Many Christians (as they must be called) are such strangers to this work of imploring, and calling in the blessed Spirit, as if they were capable of adopting these words, *We have not so much as heard whether there be an Holy Ghost.* That name is with them as an empty sound. How hardly are we convinc't of our necessary dependance, on that *free Spirit*, to all our truly Spiritual operations? This Spirit is the very earnest of our inheritance. The foretasts, and first fruits we have here of the future blessedness; The joy and pleasure, the complacential reliſhes, we have of it beforehand, are by the gracious vouchsafement and work of this blessed Spirit. The things that *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and which have not entred into the heart of man, are revealed by*

*this Spirit.* Therefore doth the Apoſtle direct his Prayer on the behalf of the *Epheſians*, to the Father of this glory, *that he would give them this Spirit of wiſdom and revelation,--to enlighten the eyes of their underſtanding, that they might know the hope of his calling, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in* (or among) *the Saints.* And its revelation is ſuch as begets an impreſſion; in reſpect whereof 'tis ſaid alſo to *ſeal* up to the day of redemption. Therefore pray earneſtly for this Spirit; not in idle dreaming words of courſe, but as being really apprehenſive of the neceſſitie of prevailing. And give not over till thou find that ſacred fire diffuſing it ſelf through thy mind and heart, to enlighten the one, and refine the other, and ſo prepoſſeſs *both*, of this glory; that thy ſoul may be all turned into *joy* and *praiſe.* And then let me adde here (without the formality of a diſtinct head.) That it concerns thee to take heed of quenching that Spirit, by either reſiſting, or neglecting its holy dictates, or as the ſame precept is otherwiſe given of *grieving the Spirit*; he is, by Name and Office, the Comforter. The Primitive Chriſtians, 'tis ſaid, walked in the fear of God, and *in the comfort of the Holy Ghoſt.* Is it equal dealing *to grieve him*, whoſe buſineſs it is to *comfort thee*? or canſt thou expect *joy*, where thou cauſeſt *grief? Walk in the Spirit*, adore its power. Let thy Soul do it homage within thee. Wait for its holy influences, & yield thy ſelf to its ducture and guidance; ſo wilt thou go as the *redeemed* of the

Lord, with *everlaſting joy upon thy head*, till thou enter that preſence, where is fulneſs of joy, and pleaſures for evermore.

Nor do thou think it improper, or ſtrange, that thou ſhould'ſt be called upon to rejoyce in what thou doſt not yet poſſeſs. Thy hope is in ſtead of fruition; 'tis an anticipated enjoyment. We are commanded *to rejoyce in hope*, and Saints have profeſt to do ſo; to rejoyce *even in the hope*, the *hope of the glory of God*. Nor is it unreaſonable that ſhould be thy preſent higheſt joy. For though yet it be a diſtinct thing, and indiſtinctly revealed, the excellency of the object makes compenſation for *both*, with an abundant ſurpluſage. As any one would much more rejoyce to be *aſſured* by a great perſon, of ample poſſeſſions, he would make him his heir to, (though he knew not diſtinctly what they ſhould be) then to ſee a *ſhilling*, already his own, with his own eyes.

Rom. 12. 12.

Rom. 5. 2.

## CHAP. XXX.

*The addition of two Rules that more ſpecially reſpect the yet future ſeaſon of this bleſſedneſs*; after this life, *viz. Rule* 7. *That we patiently wait for it until death. Rule* 8. *That we love not too much this preſent life.*

THere are yet two more Rules to be ſuperadded, that reſpect the ſeaſon of this bleſſedneſs: [when we awake] *i.e.* not till we go out of time, into eternity; not till we paſs out of the drowſie darkneſs of our preſent ſtate, till the night be over with us, and the vigorous light of the everlaſting day do ſhine upon us. Hence therefore it will be further neceſſary.

7. *That while the appointed proper ſeaſon of this bleſſedneſs is not yet come* (i.e. till God ſhall vouchſafe to tranſlate us from our preſent earthly ſtate) *we compoſe our Spirits to a patient expectation of it.* *Rule* 7.

Upon a twofold account, the exerciſe of patience is very requite in the preſent caſe, *viz.* both in reſpect of this very *expectation* it ſelf, and alſo in reſpect of the *concomitant miſeries of this expecting ſtate.* In the *former reſpect*, an *abſent good*, is the matter of our patience; in the *latter*, *preſent and incumbent evil.* It falls more directly, in our way to ſpeak to the exerciſe

ercise of patience upon the *former account*, yet as to the latter (though it be more collateral as to our present purpose) it cannot be unseasonable, briefly to consider that also.

First, Therefore, the *very expectation it self of this blessedness*, renders *patience* very requisite to our present state. Patience hath as proper and necessary an exercise, in *expecting the good* we want and desire, as in *enduring the evil*, that is actually upon us. The direction (it must be remembred) intends such onely, as apprehend, and desire this blessedness as their greatest good, whose souls are transported with earnest longings, fully to enjoy what they have foretasted. I am apprehensive enough that others need it not. There is no use of patience in expecting what we desire not.

But as to those who desire it most, and who therefore are most concerned in this advice; It may possibly become a doubt; how, *since there is sin in our present ignorance of God, and unlikeness to him, this can be the matter of any patience.*

We must therefore know, that as our knowledge of God, and conformity to him are both our *duty*, and *blessedness*; the matter both of our *endeavour*, and of Gods *vouchsafement*. So our ignorance of him, and unlikeness to him, are both our *sin*, and our *misery*; which misery, though God have graciously removed it in part, yet also he continues it upon us in part (as our sad experience tells us) by his just, and wise dispensation, which we cannot except against. Now

Now therefore, looking upon the defect of our knowledge of God, and likeness to him, under the *former notion*; Though we are to reflect upon *our selves* with greater displeasure and indignation; yet looking on them, in the *latter notion*, we are to submit to the righteous dispensation of God, with a meek, unrepining patience.

By this patience, therefore, I mean; not a stupid succumbencie under the remaining disease, and distemper of our Spirits, in this our present state; a senseless indifferency, and oscitant cessation from continual endeavours of further redress; but a silent and submissive veneration of Divine Wisdom, and Justice, and Goodness, that are sweetly complicated in this procedure with us; with a quiet peaceful expectation of the blessed issue of it.

This being premised, I shall briefly shew.

That we have need of patience } in this pre-
That we have reason for it } sent case.

1. *That we have need of it* (supposing our souls are *intent upon glory*; that we are in earnest in this pursuit) will appear upon sundry accounts.

First, The *greatness of the thing we expect. To behold the face of God, to be satisfied with his likeness.* What serious heart, apprehensive of its own concerns, can without much patience, hold out under such an expectation? How do Lovers, that expect the marriage day, tell the hours, and chide the Sun that it makes no more haste? But how can that soul contain

it

it ſelf, that expects the moſt intimate fruition of the Lord of glory!

Again, conſider, *the continued repreſentation, and frequent inculcations of this glory.* Its vigorous powerful beams are, by often repealed pulſations, continually beating upon ſuch ſouls, as are intent towards it. Life and Immortality are brought to light in the Goſpel; and they are obliged, by command, and inclination, to attend its diſcoveries. The eye that's once ſmitten, looks again, and again, 'tis not ſatisfied with ſeeing; and every renewed look meets with, ſtill, freſh raies of glory; They have frequent foretaſts, and prelivations, which ſtill give life to new deſires. To lie under the direct ſtroke of the *power of the world to come*, this requires much patience, to ſuſtain the burden of ſuch an expectation. Life it ſelf were otherwiſe a bitter, and a wearisome thing. * And the want of ſuch foretaſts (for alaſs they are not conſtant) makes deſire ſometimes more reſtleſs, and expectation more bitter and grievous.

* Canerem tibi angelicâ voce thronorum quàm mirificâ, ſemper in patriâ dulcedine repleamur; niſi vererer, ne fortè, poſthâc tantæ dulcedinis hujus comparatione; tota tibi in terris vita non ſolum amariſſima verum etiam amaritudo ipſo penitus videatur. *M. Ficin. Epiſt.*

Moreover conſider *the nature and Spring of theſe deſires*, that work in heavenly ſouls towards this glory. They are of a Divine Nature, and Original; *He that hath wrought us to this ſelf ſame thing is God*, 2 Cor. 5. 5.

Obſerve the tenour of this Propoſition, God is not the ſubject of predication, but the predicate. The action is not predicated of God; as it would in this form of words, God hath wrought us, &c. but God is predicated of this agent, q. d. *This is the work of a Deity*; none but

but God could be the Author of ſuch deſires. That a Soul ſhould be acted towards glory by the alone power of an Almighty hand! here needs a *Divine Patience* to ſuſtain it, and make it ſtrong, and able to endure ſuch a *motion*; where there is *Divine Power* to act and move it forward. The Frame could not hold it elſe, it muſt deſolve. The Apoſtle therefore praying for the *Theſſalonians*, That *God would direct their hearts into the love of himſelf* (which could not but enflame their ſouls with a deſire of a perfect vision, and injoyment) preſently adds, *and into the patient waiting for of Chriſt*. Where we cannot by the way but reflect upon the admirable conſtitution, and equal temper of the new Creature, as *to the principles*, that are ingredient into the compoſition of it, *fervent deſire*; allayed with *meek ſubmiſſion, mighty love*, with *ſtrong patience*. If we conſider it in *actu ſignato*, or in its abſtract, *Idea*, this is its temperament: and of theſe there is a gradual participation, where ever you find it actually exiſting. God had otherwiſe formed a creature (the prime of his creatures) ſo as by its moſt intrinſecal conſtituent principles to be a torment to it ſelf. a Theſ. 3. 5.

Laſtly, The *tireſome nature of expectation in it ſelf*, is not leaſt conſiderable. It carries ('tis true) pleaſure (if it be *hoping expectation*) with it; but not without a great admixture of pain. It brings a kind of torture to the mind, as a continued exertion or ſtretching forth of the neck (by which it

is

Rom. 8. 19. is expreſt) doth to the body. Therefore it is moſt ſignificantly ſaid by the wiſe man, *Hope* Prov. 12. 12. *deferr'd, makes the heart ſick.* All theſe, I ſay, together diſcover the truth of what the Heb. 10. Apoſtle tells us. *We have need of patience, that when we &c. we may inherit the Promiſe.*

2. And as we have need of it, ſo *we have alſo reaſon for it*, upon many accounts. 'Tis no piece of rigorous ſeverity to be put upon the exerciſe of ſome patience, to be kept a-while in a waiting poſture for the completion of this bleſſedneſs. For

Firſt, *The thing you expect is ſure.* You have not to do in this matter with one who is inconſtant, or likely to change. If ſuch a one ſhould make us large promiſes, we ſhould have ſome cauſe, never to think our ſelves ſecure, till we had them made good to us. But Tit. 1. 2. ſince we *live in the hope of eternal life, which God* Heb. 10. 23. *who cannot lie*, and who, we *know, is faithful, hath promiſed*, we may be confident, and this confidence ſhould quiet our hearts. What a faithful friend keeps for us, we reckon as ſafe in his hands, as in our own. *He that believes makes not haſt.* An impatient haſte argues an unbelieving jealouſie and diſtruſt. *Surely*, there is an end, and thy expectation will be cut off.

And then, *'tis an happineſs that will recompenſe the moſt wearyſome expectation.* 'Twere good ſometimes to conſider with our ſelves, what's the object of our hope? are our expectations pitch't upon a valuable good? that will be worth

worth while to expect, so the Psalmist, *what wait I for?* and he answers himself, *my hope is in thee*, Sure then that hope will not make ashamed. Twere a confounding thing to have been a long time full of great hopes, that at last dwindle into some pettie trifle; but when we know before hand the business is such as will defray it self, bear its own charges, who would not be contented to wait? Ps. 39. 7.

*Nor will the time of expectation be long, when I shall awake, -when he shall appear.* Put it to the longest term, 'twas said, 1600 years ago, to be but a little while, three times over in the shutting up of the Bible, he tells us *I come quickly.* He seems to foresee he should be something impatiently expected: And at last *Surely* I come quickly. *q. d.* What will you not believe me? *Be patient saith the Apostle to the coming of the Lord*; and presently he adds *be patient stablish your hearts for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.* James 5.

*Yea, and amidst the many troubles of that short time of expectation, many present comforts are intermixt.* Heaven is open to us. We have constant liberty of access to God. He disdains not our present converse; We may have the constant pleasure of the exercise of grace, the heavenly delights of meditation. The joy of the publique Solemnities, of worship. The communion, and encouragement of fellow Christians. The light of that countenance whereof we expect the eternal vision. The comforts of the Holy Ghost. The continual prospect of glory all the way thither.

What

What cause have we of impatience or complaint?

Further, *Saints of all ages have had their expecting time.* We are required to be followers of them, who through faith and patience have inherited the promises. Our Saviour himself waited a lifes time for his *glorification.* I have (saith he) glorify'd thee on earth; I have finished the work thou gavest me to do. And now further glorifie me with thine own self &c.

*And while we are waiting (if it be not our fault) our glory will be encreasing*; we may be glorifying God in the mean time, which is the end of our beings, we need not live here to no purpose.

Again, *We were well enough content till God more clearly revealed that other state to live always as we do.* Tis not now ingenuous to be impatiently querulous about the time of our entring into it. Tis his free vouchsafement we never merited such a thing at his hands. Tis not commendable among men, to be over quick in exacting doubts; even where there was an antecedent right, much less where the right onely shall accrue by promise, not yet suitable, would it not shame us to have God say to us. *Have patience with me and I will pay you all?*

And our former state should be often reflected on. If you had promised great things to a wretch lately taken off the dunghil, and he is every day impatiently urging you to an untimely accomplishment, would you not check

check his over bold haſt, by minding him of his original? It becomes not baſe and low born perſons to be tranſported with a prepoſterous over haſty expectation of high and and great things.

And if God bear with the ſinfulneſs of our preſent ſtate, is it not reaſonable we ſhould bear with the infelicitie of it to his appointed time? James 1. 4.

Beſides that, we ſhould much injure our ſelvs by our impatiency; imbitter our preſent condition, increaſe our own burthen, diſſipate our ſtrength, retard our progreſſe towards the perfection we profeſs to aim at; for patience muſt have its perfect work, that we may be perfect.

And others that have had as clear apprehenſions and vigorous deſires (at leaſt) of the future ſtate of glory as we can (with modeſty) pretend to; have yet herein moderated themſelves ſo, as to intend their preſent worke with compoſed ſpirits. Take that one inſtance of the bleſſed Apoſtles who, whileſt, in this earthly tabernacle, he groaned, being burthen'd to be cloth'd, with glory, and to have mortality ſwallowed up of life being ſenſible enough, that during his abode, or preſence in the body, he was abſent from the Lord; yet notwithſtanding the fervor and vehemency of theſe longings, with the greateſt calmneſs, and reſignation imaginable, (*as to* the termination, or continuance of his preſent ſtate) he adds, that (though he had rather be abſent from the body to be preſent with the Lord) 2 Cor. 5. 9. φιλοτιμεμεθα.

Lord) *it was yet his chief ambition* (as the word he uſes ſignifies) *whether preſent or abſent* (as if in compariſon of that, to be preſent, or abſent were indifferent though otherwiſe out of that compariſon, he had told us he would be abſent rather) to be *accepted* to appear grateful, and well pleaſing in the eye of God, ſuch that he might delight, and take content in (as his expreſſion imports.) As if he had ſaid; though I am not unapprehenſive of the ſtate of my caſe, I know well, I am kept out of a far more deſirable condition, while I remain in this tabernacle; yet, may I but pleaſe and appear acceptable in the ſight of God, whether I be ſooner diſmiſt from this thraldom, or longer, continued in it, I contend not. His burden here, that ſo ſenſibly preſt him, was not a preſent evil ſo much as an *abſent good*. He was not ſo burden'd by *what he felt*, and could not remove, as by what *he ſaw*, and *could not enjoy*. His groans accordingly were not *brutal*; as thoſe of a beaſt under a too heavy load; but *rational*, the groans of an apprehenſive ſpirit panting after an alluring, inviting glory; which he had got the proſpect of, but could not yet attain. And hence the ſame ſpiritual reaſon which did *exerciſe*, did alſo at once *moderate* his deſires, ſo that as he ſaw there was reaſon to deſire, ſo he ſaw there was reaſon his deſires ſhould be allayd by a ſubmiſſive ingenuous patience, till they might have a due and ſeaſonable accompliſhment. And that ſame temper of mind we find him in, when he profeſſes to be in a *ſtrait* between two, having a deſire

*deſire to be diſſolved and to be with Chriſt, which he thought to be far better, and yet apprehended his longer abode in the world, to be needful for the ſervice of the Church*; whereupon he expreſſes his confidence, *that he ſhould abide longer*, and therein diſcovers how well contented he was, it ſhould be ſo. Phil.

Therefore, as in reference to this very expectation it ſelf, there is great need of patience; ſo the exercise of it in this caſe hath nothing harſh, or unreaſonable in it, or which the ſpirit of a Saint may not well comport with.

And for the exercise of patience upon the *latter account*; the *concomitant miſeries of this our preſent expecting ſtate*. I need not inſiſt to ſhew how needfull it is, this being that which our own ſenſe will ſufficiently inſtruct us in. We are not to expect the future ſtate of bleſſedneſs in a ſtate of preſent eaſe and reſt, in a quiet friendly world; in a calm and peaceful region under placide and benigne influences from men, and times; but amidſt ſtorms, and tempeſts, and trouble on every ſide, under frowns and diſpleaſures, threats and dangers, harſh and rough ſeverities, ill and ungentle uſages, flouts and ſcornes, wrongs and injurious dealings, wants and preſſures in many kinds. When the *world is once forſaken* by us, it grows angry; If we diſclaim it, and avow our ſelves not to be of it, becomes confeſſed ſtrange and pilgrims in it, ſet our ſelves ſeriouſly, and viſibly to mind and deſign ſomething above and beyond it, diſcover our ſelves to be of them, that are *called out of it*, from 2.

the ſame principle that it *loves its own*, it will
1 John. 3. 1. *hate us*; when once *God calls us his ſons, the world will not know us.* We ſee in this context we are diſcourſing from what the Pſalmiſt condition was, whilſt, as yet he remained under this bleſſed expectation. He found *the men of time*, whoſe *portion was in this life*, to be deadly enemies, wicked oppreſſors, proud inſulters? They were to him as greedy lions, as a blood thirſty ſword. His cryes to be delivered from them, ſhew what he *met* with at their hands, or thought he had reaſon to *fear*. Nor can ſo raging enmity and hate ever ceaſe to meditate miſchiefs and cruelties. The ſame principle ſtill remains in all the Serpents brood, and will ſtill be putting forth it ſelf in ſuitable practiſes, which cannot but infer to the contrary *Seed*, continual trouble and matter of complaint.

And (in ſhort) whatever is here the matter of your complaint, ought to be the matter of your patience. Whence it cannot be doubted the
Col 1. 11. matter of it will be very copious; ſo as to require the *Fall* of patience (as the Apoſtle ſpeaks) which his addreſsing this ſolemn requeſt to God on the behalfe of theſe Coloſsian Chriſtians plainly intimates. He prays that *they may be ſtrengthened with all might according to the glorious power of God unto all patience*, &c. Patience is the Chriſtians *ſuffering power*, 'tis *Paſſive fortitude*, an *ability to ſuffer*; and ſo apprehenſive he is of their great need of a full, and ample ſupply of this *power*; that, he prayes, that they might be

ſtrength-

strengthened in this kind with *might*, with *all might*, that they might be even *almighty sufferers*; strengthed with a might *according* and correſponding *to the glorious power of God himſelf*; Such as might appear the proper impreſs and image of *divine power*, whereof the divine power mightbe both the *principle*, and the *pattern* (for the patience whereby God bears the wrongs done to him is called power too; *Let the power of the Lord be great as thou haſt ſpoken, ſaying, the Lord is long ſuffering forgiving &c.*) And this unto *all patience*, where *patience* is put for an *act of this power*, or muſt be underſtood of patience in exerciſe, *actual bearing*.

Nor are we to look upon the expreſsions of this prayer as ſo many hyperbolical ſtrains, or Rhetorical ſchemes of Speech. He prays according to the apprehenſion he had of the neceſsity of ſuffering Chriſtians.

And yet how much ſoever the *need* is, the *reaſon* is not leſs, Tis a thing as *poſſible* as it is *neceſſary*; yea there is a deal more in the power *of the cauſe*; then to work this ſingle *effect*. I mean it not onely of the efficient cauſe mentioned before, but of the objection, or final (as having ſuch a ſuperabundant ſufficiencie in its kind alſo) hinted in the cloſe of the following verſe. He doth not utter vain and groundleſs wiſhes, when he prays, that to that *all of patience they might* add *joyfulneſs* too, and *giving of thanks*; no the matter (as if he had ſaid) will bear it, even the inheritance of the Saints in light (the very expectation *objective*, I am ſpeaking of)

It hath enough in it to induce, not onely *patience*, but *joy*, not a contented *bearing* onely, but *giving of thanks* too, *to him that hath made you meet for that inheritance.*

V.r. 12.

True it is indeed, that the very need we have of patience, and the gain that would accrue by it, is it ſelf a reaſon, why we ſhould labour to frame our ſpirits to it, for if ſuch evils muſt be undergone, how much better is it to bear *them alone*, then to have the diſeaſe of a wounded impatient ſpirit, to bear alſo, as an additional burden. *The law of patience*, is, certainly, a moſt indulgent, merciful Law, a gracious proviſion (as much as can be made by a Law, for the quiet, and eaſe of our ſpirits, under the ſharpeſt, and moſt afflictive ſufferings. As might at large be ſhewn, were it ſuitable to fall into a diſcourſe of patience in it ſelf conſidered: and to treat of that reſt, and pleaſure, that liberty of Spirit, that poſſeſſion and dominion of ones own ſoul, which it carries in it. But that were two much a digreſſion. It onely falls directly here in our way to conſider, that as we have many grievances and preſſures to undergo, while we are expecting the future bleſſedneſs, which render the exerciſe of patience very requiſite, ſo that there is enough of weight, and worth, *in that very expectation* (*i. e.* in what we expect) to outweigh them all: and to render the exerciſe thereof highly reaſonable upon that acount. *I reckon* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *that the ſufferings of this preſent time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that ſhall be revealed in us.* Thus (ſaith

Rom. 8 18.

(ſaith he) *I reckon*, i. e. it is my ſtated, ſetled judgment, not a ſuddain raſh thought. When I have reaſon'd the matter with my ſelf, weigh'd it well, conſider'd the caſe, turn'd it round, view'd it exactly on every ſide; ballanc'd advantages, and diſadvantages, ponder'd all things, which are fit to come into conſideration about it; *this is the reſult*, the final determination; that which I conclude and judge at laſt (judgment is the laſt product, and iſſue of the moſt exquiſite enquiry, and debate: the ultimate, and moſt perfect act of reaſon) that the *ſufferings of this now of time* are of no value: things not fit, as it were, to be mentioned the ſame day, *with the glory to be revealed, &c.* It can therefore be no *hard Law*, no unreaſonable impoſition, that ſhall oblige us to the exerciſe of patience, under ſuch ſufferings, *in the expectation of ſo tranſcendent glory.* For, conſider,

First, Theſe ſufferings are but from men; (For the ſufferings, of which the Apoſtle here ſpeaks, are ſuch as wherein we ſuffer together with Chriſt, *i. e.* for his Name, and Intereſt, on behalf of the Chriſtian cauſe.) But this glory is from God. How diſproportionable muſt the effects be of a created, and increated cauſe.

Again, Theſe ſufferings reach no further then the bone and fleſh. (*Fear not them that kill the body, and, after they have done that*, can do no more, &c.) But this glory reaches unto, and transforms the ſoul. How little can a

clod of earth ſuffer, in compariſon of what an immortal Spirit may enjoy?

And further, There is much mixture in our preſent ſufferings. The preſent ſtate of ſuffering *Saints* is not a ſtate of *total miſery*. There are, as it were Raies of Glory *interlac'd* with their preſent afflictions; but there will be nothing of Affliction mingled with their future Glory.

Yea, and (what may not only convince, but even tranſport us too) theſe ſufferings are but *temporary* (nay, but *momentary*.) This *glory eternal*. What heart is big enough to comprehend the full ſenſe of theſe words. *Our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.* How might I dwell here upon every ſillable, *light affliction*, weighty glory [exceeding weight] affliction for a moment, eternal weight of glory!

2 Cor. 4. 17.

O then, how unworthy is it of the Chriſtian name, and hopes, that we ſhould have an impatient reſentment of this Method God follows with us (as he did with our great Redeemer, and Lord) that we ſhould ſuffer firſt, and then enter into glory! Heaven were a poor Heaven, if it would not make us ſavers. It were high time for us to give over the Chriſtian profeſſion, if we do not really account that its reward, and hope do ſurmount its reproach, and trouble; or do think its Croſs more weighty, then its Crown. Is the price, and worth of eternal glory ſal'n? It hath been counted worth ſuffering for. There have been

those

thoſe in the world, that would not accept deliverance from theſe ſufferings, that they might obtain the better reſurrection. Are we grown wiſer? or would we indeed wiſh God ſhould turn the Tables, and aſſign us our good things here, and hereafter evil things? ungrateful ſouls! How ſevere ſhould we be to our ſelves? that we ſhould be ſo apt to *complain*, for what we ſhould *admire* and give thanks. What becauſe purer, and more refined Chriſtianity in our time, and in this part of the world, hath had publick favour and countenance, can we therefore not tell how to frame our minds to the thoughts of ſuffering? Are *Tribulation* & *Patience* antiquated names? quite out of date, and uſe with us? and more ungrateful to our ears and hearts, then heaven and eternal glory are acceptable? And had we rather (if we were in danger of ſuffering on the Chriſtian account) run a hazard, as to the *latter*, then adventure on the *former*? Or do we think it impoſſible, we ſhould ever come to the trial, or be concern'd to buſie our ſelves with ſuch thoughts? Is the world become ſo ſtable, and ſo unacquainted with viciſſitudes, that a ſtate of things leſs favourable to our profeſſion can never revolve upon us? It were however not unuſeful to put ſuch a caſe by way of ſuppoſition to our ſelves. For every ſincere Chriſtian is in affection, and preparation of his mind a Martyr. He that loves not Chriſt better then *his own life*, *cannot be his Diſciple*. We ſhould, at leaſt inure our thoughts more to a ſuffering ſtate; that we may thence take ſome occaſion to reflect,

reflect, and judge of the temper of our hearts towards the Name and Cause of Christ. 'Tis easie suffering indeed, *in Idea*, and *contemplation*, but something may be collected from *the observation*, how we can relish and comport with such thoughts. 'Tis *as training* in order to fight; which is done, often, upon every remote supposition, that such occasions may possibly fall out.

Therefore what now do we think of it? If our way into the Kingdom of God, shall be through many tribulations. If, before we behold the smiles of *his* blessed face, we must be entertained with the less pleasing sight of the frowning aspect, and visage of an angry world. If we first bear the image of a crucified Christ, e're we partake of the likeness of a glorious God? what, do we regret the thoughts of it? Do we account we shall be ill dealt with, and have an hard bargain of it? O how tender are we grown in comparison of the hardiness and magnanimity of Primitive Christians? we have not the patience to *think* of what they had the patience to *endure*. We should not yet forget our selves, that such a thing belongs to our profession, even in this way to testifie our fidelity to Christ, and our value of the inheritance, purchased by his blood, if he call us thereunto. We must know it is a thing inserted into the Religion of Christians; and with respect to their condition in this world) made an essential thereto. He cannot be a Christian, *that doth not deny himself, and take up the Cross.* How, often, when the active part of a Christians duty

duty is ſpoken of, is the paſſive part ſtudiouſly, and expreſly annexed? *Let us run* [with patience] *the race that is ſet before us.* The good ground *brought forth fruit* [with patience] *eternal life* is for them that by [a patient] *continuance in well doing, ſeek after it.* Yea, and hence the Word of Chriſt is called the Word of his [patience.] And the ſtile wherein the beloved Diſciple ſpeaks of himſelf, and his profeſſion is this: *I John, a companion in tribulation, and in the Kingdom and* [patience] *of Jeſus Chriſt.* Do we mean to plead the preſcription againſt all this? or have we got an expreſs exemption? Have we a diſcharge to ſhew? a manumiſſion from all the ſuffering part of a Chriſtians duty? and is it not a diſcharge alſo from being Chriſtians as much? Will we diſavow our ſelves to belong to that noble Society of them that through Faith and Patience inherit the promiſes? Surely we are highly conceited of our ſelves, if we think we are too good to be numbred among them, of whom the *world was not worthy.* Or we deſign to our ſelves along abode here, while we ſo much value the Worlds favour, and a freedom from worldly trouble: Or Eternity is with us an empty ſound, and the future bleſſedneſs of Saints, an airy thing, that we ſhould reckon it inſufficient to counterpoiſe the ſufferings of a few haſty days, that will ſo ſoon have an end. 'Tis a ſad Symptom of the declining ſtate of Religion, when the powers of the world to come are ſo overmaſtered, by the powers of this preſent world; and objects of ſenſe ſo much outweigh

H b. 12. 1.
Mat.
Rom
Rev.
Chap.

weigh thoſe of Faith. And is not this apparently the caſe with the Chriſtians of the preſent age. Do not your thoughts run the ſame courſe with theirs, that meditated nothing but ſitting on the right and left hand of Chriſt, in an earthly dominion? while they never dream't of drinking of his Cup, or being baptized, with his Baptiſm? How many vain dreamers have we of golden mountains and (I know not what) earthly felicity? whoſe pretended Prophelies about a (ſuppoſed) near approaching proſperity to the Church on earth, gain eaſier belief, or are more ſavory, and taking with too many; then all that the Sacred Oracles diſcover about its glorious ſtate in heaven? Hence are our ſhoulders ſo unfitted to Chriſts yoke (like the unaccuſtomed Heifer) and the buſineſs of ſuffering will not enter into our hearts. Methinks the belief, and expectation of ſuch a ſtate hereafter, ſhould make us even regardleſs of what we ſee, or ſuffer here; and render the good, or evil things of time, as indifferent to us. Yet neither plead I for an abſolute Stoical *Apathy*, but for *patience*. A great follower of that Sect acknowledges, "It is not a vertue to *bear* "what we *feel* not, or have no ſenſe of. Stu- "pidity under Providence is not a Chriſtian "temper: as that Moraliſt ſayes of the wiſe man. "'Tis not the hardneſs of ſtone or iron "that is to be aſcribed to him.

Sen. de Conſtant. ſapientis.

But leaſt any ſhould run into that more dangerous miſtake, to think, that by the *patience* we have been all this while perſwading to (in the ex-

expectation of the bleſſedneſs yet to come) is meant a *love of this preſent world*, and a complacential adherence of heart to the earth, (which extream the terrene temper of many ſouls, may much encline them to.) It will be neceſſary upon that account to adde (in reference alſo to the yet future expected ſeaſon of this bleſſedneſs (this further, and concluding inſtruction, *viz.*

That (however we are not to repine at our being held ſo long in this world in an expecting ſtate: yet) *we let not our ſouls cleave too cloſe to their terreſtrial ſtations, nor be too much in love with the body, and this preſent, low ſtate of life on earth.* *Rule* 8.

For evident it is, that notwithſtanding all the miſeries of this expecting ſtate: the moſt are yet loath to leave the world, and have hearts ſordidly hankering after preſent things. And ſurely there is much difference between being *patient* of an abode on earth, and being *fond* of it. Therefore ſince the true bleſſedneſs of Saints conſiſts in ſuch things as we have ſhewn, and cannot be enjoy'd *till we awake*, not within the compaſs of time, and this lower world. It will be very requiſite to inſiſt here a while in the proſecution of this laſt Rule. And what I ſhall ſay to it, ſhall be by way of

*Caution.*
*Inforcement.*

1. For *Caution*, that we miſapprehend not that temper and diſpoſition of Spirit, we are in this thing to endeavour and aim at. And

it

it especially concerns us to be cautious about the

{ *Inducements.*
{ *Degree.*

Of that desire of leaving this world, or contempt of this present life, which we either aspire to, or allow our selves in.

First, *Inducements.* Some are desirous, others at least content, to quit the world upon very insufficient, or indeed, wicked considerations.

1. There are, who desire it, meerly to be out of the way of present troubles, whereof they have either too impatient a sense, or an unworthy, and impotent fear.

Many times the urgency and anguish of *incumbent* trouble impresses such a sense, and utters it self in such a language as that, *Now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee, my life from me. for it is better for me to die, then to live*; *Or that, My soul chuseth strangling and death rather then life: Makes men long for death, and dig for it, as for hid treasures: rejoyce and be exceeding glad when they can find the grave.*

John 4. 3.
Joh. 7. 15.

Yea, and the very fear of troubles that are but *impendent*, and threatning, make some wish the Grave a Sanctuary, and render the Clods of the Valley sweet unto their thoughts. They lay possibly so humoursom and phansiful stress, upon the meer circumstances of dying, that they are earnest *to dye out of hand*, to avoid *dying so, and so*; as the Poet would fain perswade himself it was not *Death* he feared, but *Shipwrack*. It would not trouble them to *dye*, but

Demite naufragium mors mihi mauis erit. *Ovid.*

to

*to dye by a violent hand*, or to be made a publick ſpectacle; they cannot endure the thoughts of *dying ſo*. Here is nothing commendable or worthy of a Chriſtian in all this. It were a piece of Chriſtian bravery to dare to live in ſuch a caſe, even when there is a viſible likelihood, of dying, a ſacrifice in the midſt of flames. How much this glory was affected in the earlier days of Chriſtianity is ſufficiently known. Though, I confeſs, there were exceſſes in that kind altogether unimitable. But if God *call* a man forth to be his Champion, and witneſs, to lay down a life, in it ſelf little deſirable, in a truly, worthy cauſe; The call of his Providence, ſhould be as the ſound of the Trumpet, to a truly Martial Spirit; it ſhould fill his ſoul with a joyful courage, and ſenſe of honour; and be comply'd with cheerfully, with that apprehenſion, and reſentment, a ſtout Souldier would have of his Generals putting him upon ſome very hazardous piece of ſervice, viz. he would ſay, "*My General hath not* (*as* "*the Moraliſt expreſſes his ſenſe for him*) *de*- "*ſerved ill of me, but it appears he judged well.* It ſhould *be counted all joy to* [*fall into*] *ſuch tryals*; that is, when they become our lot by a providential diſpoſition; not by a raſh precipitation of our ſelves. And as it is *a wickedneſs inconſiſtent with Chriſtianity*, to be of that habitual temper, to *chuſe to deſert ſuch a cauſe for the ſaving of life*; ſo it is a *weakneſs very reproachful to it*; to lay down ones life in ſuch a caſe, with regret as unwilling *in this kind*, to glorifie him who laid down *his* for us.

Imperator de me non mali meruit ſed benè judicavit, *Senec. Jam.* l. 2.

We

*we are no more to dye to our selves, then to live to our selves.* Our Lord Jesus hath purchased to himself a Dominion over both states *of the living and dead*, and whether *we live we must live to him, or dye we must dye to him.* Tis the glory of a Christian to live so much above the world, that nothing in it may make him either *fond* of life, or *weary* of it.

Rom. 15.7,8. 9.

2. There are others who are (at least) indifferent, and careless how soon they dye, out of either a worse than paganish infidelity, disbelieving the concernments of another world, or a bruitish stupidity not apprehending them, or a gross conceited ignorance, misunderdanding the terms of the Gospel, and thinking themselves to be in a good condition, as to eternity when the case is much otherwise with them.

Take heed thy willingness to dye be from no such inducements: but a meer desire of being with God, and of attaining his perfection and blessedness, which he hath ingaged thee in the pursuit and expectation of. And then, having made sure it be right as to the rise and principle. Be careful, *It be not under in point of degree.* i. e. a cold intermittent velleity is too little on the one hand. And a peremptory precipitant hasting is too much on the other. The middle and desirable temper here is *a complacential submission to the Divine will in that affair, with a preponderating inclination on our part, towards our eternal home, if the Lord see good.* For we have two things to attend in this business, and by which our Spirits may be

sway'd

sway'd this way or that. i. e. *the goodness of the object to be chosen*, and *the will of God which must guide and over-rule our choice*; the former whereof we are permitted to eye in subordination to the Latter, and not otherwise.

Now our apprehension of the desirableness and intrinsique goodness of the object ought to be such (we are Infidels else, if we have not that account of it) that nothing we can eve under the notion of *a good to us*, may be reckon'd so eligible as that: viz. *our final and compleat blessedness in the other world*, which because, we know, we cannot enjoy without dying, death also must be judged more eligible then Life, that is, Our Blessedness must be judged, *eligible for it self*, and *Death as requisite* to make it *present*. So that the entire object we are discoursing of, being *present Blessedness*, Consider it in comparison with any thing else, that can be looke upon by us, as a *good which we our selves are to enjoy*, it ought to be preferr'd and chosen out of hand, in as much as nothing can be so great *a present good to us*, as that. And this ought to be the proper habitual inclination of our Spirits, their constant frame and bent, as they respect onely *our own interest and welfare*.

But considering Gods Dominion over us, and interest in our Lives and Beings: and that as well ingenuity, as necessity binds us to be Subject to *his pleasure*, we should herein patiently suffer our selves to be over-ruled thereby, and not so abstractly mind our own in-

tereſt and contentment in this matter; as if we were altogether our own; and had no Lord over us. *Plato* who abounds in diſcourſes of the deſirableneſs of dying, and of the bleſſed change it makes with them that are good. Yet hath this apt expreſsion of the ſubjection we ought to be into the Divine pleaſure as to this matter. "That the ſoul is in the body as ſoul-
In Phædone. Vid. & Nolin. περὶ ἐξαγωγῆς. Encad. 1. "diers in a garriſon, from whence they may "not withdraw themſelves without his order "and direction who placed them there? And expoſtulates thus. "If (ſaith he) a ſlave of "yours ſhould deſtroy his own Life, without "your conſent would you not be diſpleas'd; "and, if there had been any place left for re-"venge been apt enough to that too? So he brings in *Socrates* diſcourſing, and diſcovering himſelf, herein to have had more Light in this matter touching that ſubordinate intereſt only, men have in their own lives, and the unlawfulneſs of ſelf murther (as he had in other things too) then moſt heathens of the more refined Sect ever arrived to.

If therefore God would give us leave to dye, we ſhould, *upon our own account*, be much more enclin'd to chuſe it; but, while he thinks fit to have it defer'd, ſhould yeild to his will, with an unrepining ſubmiſſion. Onely it ought not to reſt at all, *on our part*, or that, *as to our ſelves* we find any thing more grateful to us in this world, that we are willing to ſtay a day longer in it. That *for our own ſakes*, we ſhould affect a continuance here; would argue a terrene ſordid Spirit. But then ſuch ſhould be

our dutiful filial Love to the Father of our Spirits, that in pure devotedness to his interests; we would be content to dwel (if he would have it so) a Methuselahs age in an earthly tabernacle for his service; that is, that we may help to preserve his memorial in a elapsed world (over-run with Atheisme, and ignorance of its Maker) and win him hearts and love (to our uttermost) among his apostate disloyal creatures; and in our capacities be helpful to the encouragement of such as he continues in the world, for the same purposes. This is the very temper the Apostle expresses, when in that strait, *which way the poise of his own Spirit enclin'd him, in the consideration of his own interest; and what was *simply more eligible to him.* He expresses with High Emphasis; *to be with Christ*, saith, he is *more* desirable to me (for there are two comparatives in the Greek Text) and therefore he professes his *own desire* in order thereto, to be *dissolved*; but that *private desire* was not so *peremptory*, and *absolute*, but he could make it yeild, and give place to his duty towards God, and his Church, as it follows. So we know 'tis possible that, respects to a friend may oversway a mans own particular inclination; and the inclination remain notwithstanding; but is subdued onely; otherwise had any reason or argument, that did respect *my self* perswaded me to change it; I should then follow but my own proper inclination still; and so my friend hath nothing to thank me for. Phil. 1.

So it ought to be with us here; *our inclination* should preponderate towards a present change of our state, onely our devotedness to *his* interest and pleasure, *whose* we are, should easily over-rule it. This is the Lovely temper of a gracious Spirit, as to this thing, that *to dye might be our choice*, and *to live, in the mean time, submitted to as our duty.*

As an ingenuous son whom his father hath employ'd abroad in a forrain Country, though duty did bind him cheerfully therein, to comply with his fathers will and the necessity of his affairs, yet, when his Father shall signifie to him, that now he understands no necessity of his longer continuance there, and therefore he may, if he please, return but he shall have leave to follow his own inclination, Tis not hard to conjecture that the desire of seeing a Fathers face, would soon determine the choice of such a son that way.

But how remote are the generality of them that profess themselves God's Children from that pious ingenuity. We have taken root in the earth and forgotten our heavenly originals and alliances. We are as *inhabitants* here, not *pilgrims*; hardly perswaded to entertain with any patience the thoughts of leaving our places on earth; which yet, do we what we can, shall shortly know us no more.

In short then; that vile temper of Spirit against which I professedly bend my self in the following discourse is; when men, not out of any sense of duty towards God, or sollicitude for their own Souls, but of a meer fordid

did love to the body, and affixedneſs of heart to the Earth, and terrene things, cannot endure the thoughts of dying. And that, which I perſwade to, is, That having the true proſpect of the future bleſſedneſs before our eyes, and our hearts poſſeſt with the comfortable hope of attaining to it, we ſhake off our earthly inclinations; and expect with deſire and joy the time of our diſmiſſion hence, that we may enjoy it, which is the deſign of what was promiſed in the next place. *Viz.*

2. *The inforcement of this inſtruction*; Suffer we therefore our ſelves to be reaſon'd with about this matter. And let us conſider whether we can in good earneſt think ſuch an averſation, as we diſcover, to our bleſſed tranſlation hence, an excuſable, a tolerable temper: or whether it be not highly reaſonable, that we ſhould entertain the thoughts, at leaſt, with more content, and patience (if not with more fervent deſire) of our departure hence, and introduction into that other ſtate.

Let me demand of thee; doſt thou this regret the thoughts of death, as being unwilling to dye at all, or as being unwilling to dye as yet? is it the thing it ſelf, or only the circumſtance of time, that thou excepteſt againſt? 'Tis likely thou wilt ſay that which will ſeem more plauſible, and ſo fix only on the latter; and that thou wilt not profeſs to deſire an *eternity* on earth, but only *more time*. Well, let that for preſent be ſuppoſed as it is a more *modeſt*, ſo to be a *true* account of thy deſires; Yet

what is the reason of this moderation with thee herein? and that thou so limitest thy self? Is it that thou believest the blessedness of the other state will prove better then any thing thou canst enjoy here? and that thou art not willing eternally to be deprived of? but dost thou not think it is *now* better also? And what canst thou pretend, why, what is *now* the best, and most desirable good, should not be *now* chosen, and desired out of hand? or is it that thou thinkest it unbecomes thee to cross the Supreme will of him that made thee, who hath determined, *that all men once shall die*? And then, how knowest thou but he hath also determined concerning thee, that thou shalt die the next day or hour? and 'tis only *a present willingness to die in subordination to the Divine Will*, or *upon supposition of it*, thou art perswaded to. Why art thou not afraid, lest thy *present unwillingness*, should cross *his present will*? Dost thou not think that Soveraign power is as sufficient to determine of the circumstance, as the thing it self? And art thou not ashamed to pretend an agreement with God about the *thing it self*, and yet differ with him about a *circumstance*? shall that be a ground of quarrel between him and thee?

But while thou onely professest that more modest desire of more time in the world, what security can'st thou give that when that desire hath been liberally gratified, it shall at length be laid down, and tumultuate no more? What bounds wilt thou fix to it, which thou dares undertake it shall not pass? Art thou sure when

when thou shalt have lain at the Worlds Breast ten or twenty years longer, thou wilt then imagine thy self to have drawn it dry? or that then thou shalt begin to nauseate the World, and wish for Heaven? Or hast thou not reason from thy former experience to suspect that the longer thou dwellest on Earth, the more terrene thou wilt grow; and that if thou be indisposed to leave it this day, or year, thou wilt be more so the next; and so thy desire become boundless and infinite, which is to desire to be here alwayes, the thing which thou seem'dst so unwilling to own.

And if that prove at last, the true state of thy case, art thou then a Christian, or art thou a Man, that thou harboureſt in thy breast so irreligious, and irrational, yea, so sordid a wish?

What, wish eternally to be affixt to a Clod of Earth? Is that at length become thy God? Or wilt thou say he is thy God, whom thou never desireſt to enjoy? or that thou hast already enough of him, but not of the world? And yet that he is thy God? or would'ſt thou overturn the Laws of Nature; and subvert the most Sacred, Divine Constitutions, abortive the designes of Eternal Wisdom, and Love, evacuate, and nullifie the great Atchievements of thy merciful, and mighty Redeemer? onely to gratifie a Sensual, Bruitish Humour?

But evident it is, thou dost onely in vain disquiet thy self, thou canst not disturb the setled order of things. Eternal Laws are not repealable

pealable by a fond wiſh. Thou ſet'ſt this dreadful thing *Death*, at nothing the further diſtance, by thine abhorrency of it. It will overtake thee whether thou wilt or no; and methinks thine own reaſon ſhould inſtruct thee to a temper and forme thy ſelf to what thou can'ſt not avoid, and poſſeſs thee with ſuch thoughts and deſires, as thoſe of that diſcreet Pagan, "Lead me, O God, (ſaith he) whe-
Epictet "ther thou wilt, and I will follow thee willingly, "but, if I be rebellious, & refuſe, I ſhall follow "thee notwithſtanding. What we cannot decline, 'tis better to bear willingly, then with a regret, that ſhall be both *vain*, and *afflictive*.

And what haſt thou hitherto met with in the world, that ſhould ſo highly endear it to thee? Examine, and ſearch more narrowly into thy earthly comforts, what is there in them to make them ſelf-deſirable, or to be ſo for their *own ſakes*? what is it to have thy fleſh indulged and pleaſed; to have thy ſenſe gratified? thy phanſie tickled? what ſo great good, worthy of an immortal reaſonable Spirit, canſt thou find in Meats, and Drinks, in full Barns, and Coffers, in vulgar Fame, and Applauſe, that ſhould render theſe things deſireable for themſelves?

And if there were any real felicity in theſe things *for the preſent*, whil'ſt thou art permitted enjoy them, yet doſt thou not know that what thou enjoyeſt to day, thou mayſt loſe to morrow, and that ſuch other unthought of evils may befall thee; as may infuſe a bitterneſs into

into all thou enjoyeſt, which cauſes, immediately, the *injoyment* to ceaſe, while the *things themſelves* remain, and will be equal to a total loſs of all?

And thus (as the Moraliſt ingeniouſly ſpeaks) "thou wilt continually need another happineſs to defend the former, and "new wiſhes muſt ſtill be made on the behalf "of thoſe which have already ſucceeded. Sen. de brev. vit.

But canſt thou indeed think it worth the while, that the Maker of the Univerſe ſhould create a Soul, and ſend it down into the world on purpoſe, to ſuperintend theſe trivial affairs, to keep alive a ſilly piece of well figured earth, while it eats, and drinks; to move it to and fro in chaſe of ſhadows; to hold it up, while others bow the knee, and do it homage, if it had not ſome higher work to mind in reference to another ſtate? Art thou contented to live long in the world, to ſuch purpoſes? what low worthleſs Spirit is this, that had rather be ſo imploy'd, then in the viſions of this Makers face? that chuſes thus to entertain it ſelf *on earth*, rather then partake the effuſions of Divine glory *above*. *That had rather creep with Worms, then ſoar with Angels, aſſociate with Bruits, then with the Spirits of juſt men made perfect*, who can ſolve the *Phænomenon*, or give a rational account why there ſhould be ſuch a Creature as man upon the Earth, abſtructing from the hopes of another world? who can think it the effect of an infinite wiſdom? or account it a more worthy deſign, then the repreſenting of ſuch a Scene of actions and affairs

fairs by Puppets on a Stage? for my part, upon the strictest enquiry; I see nothing *in the life of man upon earth*, that should render it *for it self*, more the matter of a rational election (supposing the free option given him in the first moment of his being) then presently again to cease to be the next moment.

Yea, and is there not enough obvious in every mans experience, to incline him rather to the contrary choice; and, supposing a future blessedness in another world, to make him passionately desirous (with submission to the Divine pleasure) of a speedy dismission into it? Do not the burdens that press us *in this earthly tabernacle*, *teach* our very sense, and urge oppress nature, into involuntary groans, while as yet our *consideration* doth intervene? And if we do *consider*, is not every *thought*, a *sting*? making a much deeper impression, then what only toucheth our flesh and bones? Who can reflect upon his present state, and not presently be in pangs? The troubles that follow *humanity* are many and great; those that follow *Christianity*, more numerous, and grievous. The sickness, pains, losses, disappointments, and whatsoever afflictions that are in the Apostles language, *humane*, or *common to men* (as are all the external sufferings of Christians in *nature*, and *kind*, though they are liable to them upon an account peculiar to themselves, which there the Apostle intimates) are none of our greatest evils; yet even upon the account of them; have we any

1 Cor. 10.

reason

reaſon to be ſo much in love with ſo unkind a world? Is it not ſtrange our very *Bridewel*, ſhould be ſuch a *Heaven* to us? But theſe things are little conſiderable in compariſon of the more Spiritual grievances of Chriſtians as ſuch, that is, thoſe that afflict our Souls, while we are (under the conduct of Chriſt) deſigning for a bleſſed eternity; if we indeed make that our buſineſs, and do ſeriouſly intend our ſpirits in order thereto. The darkneſs of our beclouded minds! The glimmering, ineffectual apprehenſion we have of the moſt important things! the inconſiſtency of our ſhattered thoughts, when we would apply them to Spiritual Objects. The great difficulty of working off an ill frame of heart, and the no leſs difficulty of retaining a good! our being ſo frequently toſt as between Heaven and Hell; when we ſometimes think our ſelves to have even attained, and hope to deſcend no more; and are, all on a ſuddain plung'd in the Ditch, ſo as that our own Clothes might abhor us, fall ſo low into an earthly temper that we can like nothing Heavenly, or Divine; and becauſe we cannot, are enforced juſtly, moſt of all to diſlike our ſelves. Are theſe things little with us? How can we forbear to cry out of the depths, to the Father of our Spirits, that he would pity, and relieve his own Off-ſpring? yea are we not weary of our crying? and yet more weary of holding in? How do repell'd Temptations return again? and vanquiſhed Corruptions, recover ſtrength?

We

We know not when our work is done. We are miserable that we need to be always watching, and more miserable, that we cannot watch, but are so often surprized and overcome of evil. We say sometimes with our selves we will seek relief in retirement; but we cannot retire from our selves, or in converse with Godly friends, but they sometimes prove snares to us, and we to them. Or we hear, but our own miseries repeated in their complaints, would we pray? How faint is the breath we utter? How long is it ere we can get our Souls possest, with any becoming apprehensions of God, or lively sense of our own concernments? Would we meditate? We sometimes go about to compose our thoughts, but we may as well assay to hold the Windes in our fist. If we venture forth into the world, how do our Senses betray us? How are we mockt with their impostures? Their *neerer* objects become with us, the onely realities, and eternal things are all vanisht into airie shadowes. *Reason* and *Faith* are laid asleep, and our *Sense* dictates to us what we are to believe, and do, as if it were our only guide, and Lord. And what are we not yet wearie? Is it reasonable to continue in this State *of our own choice*? Is misery become so *natural* to us, so much our element, that we cannot affect to live out of it? Is the darkness and dirt of a dungeon more grateful to us then a free open air and sun. Is this Flesh of ours so lovely a thing that we had rather suffer so many deaths

deaths in it, then one in putting it off and mortality with it? While we carry it about us, our Souls impart a kind of life to it, and it gives them death in exchange. Why do we not cry out more feelingly, *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from this Body of Death?* Is it not grievous to us to have ſo cumberſome a yoke-fellow, to be tied (as *Mezentius* is ſaid to have done) the living and the dead together.

Do not we find the Diſtempers of our Spirits are moſtly from theſe bodies we are ſo in love with, either as the proper Springs, or as the occaſion of them. From what cauſe is our drowſy ſloth, our eager paſſions, our averſion to Spiritual objects but from this impure Fleſh, or what elſe is the Subject about which our vexatious cares, or torturing fears, our bitter griefs are taken up day by day.

And why do we not conſider that 'tis onely our love to it that gives ſtrength and vigour to the moſt of our temptations as wherein it is more immediately concern'd, and which makes them ſo often victorious, & thence to become our after-afflictions. He that hath learn'd to mortifie the inordinate love of the Body, will he make it the buſineſs of his life to purvey for it? Will he offer violence to his own Soul, to ſecure it from violence? will he comply with mens Luſts and humors for its advantage, and accommodation? or yeild himſelf to the tyranny of his own *avarice* for its future, or of his *more-ſenſual Luſts* for its *preſent* content? Will it not rather be pleaſing to him that his outward man be

be exposed to perish while his inward man is renewed day by day! He to whom the thoughts are grateful of laying it down, will not (though he neglect not duty towards it) spend his days in its continual Service, and make his Soul an hell, by a continual provision for the flesh, and the Lusts of it. That is cruel Love that shall enslave a man and subject him to so vile and ignoble a servitude. And it discovers a foolish temper to be so imposed upon. How low are our Spirits sunk that we disdain not so base a vassalage? God and nature have obliged us to live in bodies for a time, but they have not obliged us to measure our selves by them, to confine our desires and designs to their compass, to look no further then their concernments, to entertain no previous joyes in the hope of being one day delivered from them. No such hard law is laid upon us. But how apt are we to become herein, a most oppressive Law to our selves; and not only to lodge in filthy earthen cottages but to love them, and confine our selves to them, loath so much as to peep out. Tis the apt expression of a Philosopher upbraiding that base low temper. "The degenerous "Soul (saith he) buried in the Body is as a "slothful creeping thing, that loves its hole, "and is loath to come forth.

'Η δὲ ἀνελὴ ψυχὴ καταφωλευομένη ἐν σώματι, ὡς ἑρπετὸν νωθὲς εἰς φωλεὸν, φιλεῖ τὸν φωλεὸν, &c. Max. Tyr. Diss. 41.

And, methinks if we have no love for our better and more noble self, we should not be altogether unapprehensive of an obligation upon us, to express a dutiful love to the Author of our beings doth it consist with the love we owe to him, to desire always to lurk in

in the dark, and never come into his blessed presence? Is that our love that we never care to come nigh him? Do we not know that while we are present in the body, we are absent from the Lord? should we not therefore be willing rather to be present with the Lord, and absent from the body? should we not put on a confidence, an holy fortitude (as 'tis there expresst we are confident, or of good courage, and thence willing, &c.) that might carry us through the Grave to him. As is the brave Speech of that last mentioned Philosopher. "God will call thee ere long, expect "his call. Old age will come upon thee, and "shew thee the way thither, and death which "he that is possest with a base fear, laments and "dreads as it draws on; but he that is *a lover* "*of God*, expects it with joy, and with cou-"rage, meets it when it comes.

2 Cor. 5. 6, 8.

Δειλος ὁ δεδοικως τον, &c. Item. diss. 1.

Is our love to God so faint and weak, that it dares not encounter Death, nor venture upon the imaginary terrours of the Grave to go to him? How unsuitable is this to the character which is given of a Saints love? And how expressly are we told, that he who loves his life better then Christ; or that even hates it not for his sake (as certainly he cannot be said to do, that is not willing to part with it to enjoy him) cannot be his Disciple? If our love to God be not *Supreme*, 'tis *none*; or not such as can denominate us lovers of him; and will we pretend to be so, when we love a putide flesh, and this base earth better then him? And have we not professedly, as a fruit of our avowed

Can. 8.

love

love to him, surrendred our selves? Are we his devoted ones? will we be his, and yet our own? or pretend our selves dedicated to his holy pleasure, and will yet be at our own dispose, and so dispose of our selves too, as that we may be most ungrateful to him? and most uncapable of converse with him? How doth this love of a perishing life and of a little animated clay stop all the effusions of the Love of God, suspends its sweet and pleasant fruits, which should be always exerting themselves towards him? Where is their fear, obedience joy, and praise, who are through the fear of death all their lives subject to bondage? And kept under a continual dismal expectation of an unavoidable dissolution! But must the great God lose his due acknowledgements because we will not understand wherein he deals well with us? Is his mercy therefore no mercy? As we cannot nullify his truth by our *unbelief*, so nor his goodness by our *distrust*. But yet consider doth it not better become thee to be grateful, then repine that God will one day unbind thy Soul and set thee free? Knock of thy Fetters and deliver thee out of the house of thy bondage? Couldst thou upon deliberate thoughts judge it tollerable, should he doom thee to this earth forever? *He hath however judged otherwise* (as the Pagan Emperour and and Philosopher excellently speaks) *who is the Author both of the first composition of thy present being, and now of the dissolution of it; thou wert the cause of neither, therefore depart and be thankful for he that dismisseth thee, dealeth kindly with*

M. Aurel. Aut. de vit. sua l. 12. Ἀνθρώπου ἴδιος ὁ ἀποθνήσκειν ἴδιος.

*with thee.* If yet thou understandest it not yet remember. It is thy Father that disposes thus of thee, how unworthy is it to distrust his Love? What child would be afraid to compose it self to sleep in the Parents bosom? It expresses nothing of the duty and ingenuity, but much of the frowardness and folly of a child. They sometimes cry vehemently in the undressing; but should their cryes be regarded by the most indulgent Parent? or are they fit to be imitated by us?

We have no excuse for this our frowardness. The Blessed God hath told us his gracious purposes concerning us; and we are capable of understanding him. What if he had totally hidden from us our future state; and that we know nothing, but of going into an eternal silent-darkness? The Authority of a Creator ought to have awed us into a silent submission: But when we are told of such a glory; that 'tis but drawing aside this fleshly vaile, and we presently behold it, methinks the Blessed hour should be expected not with patience only but with ravishing joy.

Did we hear of a country in this world, where we might live in continual felicity, without toyl, or sickness, or grief, or fear, who would not wish to be there; though the passage were troublesome? have we not heard enough of Heaven to allure us thither? Or is *the eternal truth* of suspected credit with us? Are Gods own reports of the future glory unworthy our belief or regard?

How many, upon the credit of his word

are gone already triumphantly into glory? *That only seeing the promises afar off, were perswaded of them, and embraced them, and never after owned themselves under any other notion, then of Pilgrims on earth,* longing to be at home in their most desirable *Heavenly Country.* We are not the first that are to open Heaven. The main Body of Saints is already there, 'tis in comparison of their number, but a scattering remnant, that are now alive upon the earth. How should we long to be associated to that glorious Assembly? Methinks we should much more regret our being so long left behind.

Heb. 11. 13, 16.

But if we should desire still to be so, why may not all others as well as we? And as much expect to be gratified as we? And then we should agree in desiring, that our Redeemers triumph might be defer'd, that his Body might yet remain incompleat, that he might still be debarr'd of the long expected fruit of the travail of his Soul. that the name of God might be still subjected to the blasphemy and and reproach of an Atheistical world, who have long ago said, with derision, where is the promise of his coming? Would we have all his Designs to be still unfinisht? and so mighty wheeles stand still for us? while we sport our selves in the dust of the earth? And indulge our sensual inclination; which sure this bold desire must argue to be very predominant in us, and take heed it argue not its habitual prevalency.

At least if it discover not our present *sen-*

*suality*

*quality*, it discovers our former *Sloth*, and Idleness. It may be, we may excuse our averseness to dye, by our unpreparedness, that is one fault with another (though that be besides the case I am speaking of) what then have we been doing all this while? What were the affairs of thy Soul not thought of till now? Take then thy reproof from a Heathen, that it may convince thee the more. "No one, saith "he divides away his money from himself, but "yet men divide away their very life--" but "doth it not shame thee (he after adds) to "reserve only the reliques of thy life to thy "self, and to devote that time only to a good "mind, which thou canst employ upon no o"ther thing? How late is it to begin to live "when we should make an end? and defer all "good thoughts to such an Age as possible few "do ever reach to. The truth is (as he speaks) "we have not little time but we lose much "we have time enough were it well employ'd "therefore we cannot say we receive a short "life but we make it so, we are not indigent of "time, but prodigal, what a pretty contradi"ction is it to complain of the shortness of time, "and yet do what we can to precipitate its "course? to hasten it by that we call pa"stime. If it have been so with thee art thou "to be trusted with more time?

But as thy case is I cannot wonder that the thoughts of death be most unwellcome to thee, who art thou that thou shouldst desire the day of the Lord? I can onely say to thee *hasten thy preparation*, have recourse to Rule 2.

and 3*d*. and accordingly guide thy ſelf till thou find thy Spirit made more ſuitable to this bleſſedneſs; that it become ſavory and grateful to thy ſoul, and thy heart be ſet upon it. Hence thou may'ſt be reconciled to the grave, and the thoughts of death may ceaſe to be a terror to thee.

And when thou art attained ſo far, conſider thy great advantage in being willing and deſirous to dye upon this further account, that thy deſire ſhall now be pitch't upon a thing ſo certain. Thine other deſires have met with many a diſappointment. Thou haſt ſet thy heart upon other things, and they have deceived thy moſt earneſt, thirſty expectations. Death will not do ſo. Thou wilt now have one certain hope. One thing in reference whereto thou may'ſt ſay, *I am ſure*. Wait a while, this peaceful ſleep will ſhortly ſeize thy body, and awaken thy ſoul. It will calmly period all thy troubles, and bring thee to a bleſſed reſt.

But now, if onely the meer terrour and gloominеſs of *dying*, trouble thy thoughts, this of all other, ſeems the moſt inconſiderable pretence againſt a willing ſurrender of our ſelves to death. *Reaſon* hath overcome it, *natural courage*, yea, *ſome mens Atheiſm*, ſhall not *Faith*? Are we not aſhamed to conſider what confidence, and deſire of death, ſome *Heathens* have expreſt? ſome that have had no preapprehenſion, or belief of another ſtate, (though there were very few of them) and ſo no hope of a conſequent bleſſedneſs to re-

lie-

lieve them, have yet thought it unreaſonable to diſguſt the thoughts of death. What would'ſt thou think if thou had'ſt nothing but the Sophiſms of ſuch to oppoſe to all thy diſmal thoughts? I have met with * one arguing thus;—"Death which is accounted the moſt "dreadful of all evils, is nothing to us (ſaith "he) becauſe while we are in being, Death "is not yet preſent, and when Death is pre-"ſent, we are not in being; ſo that it neither "concerns us, as living, nor dead; for while we "are alive, it hath not touch't us, when we "are dead, we are not——. Moreover (ſaith he) "the exquiſite knowledge of this, that Death "belongs not to us, makes us injoy this mortal "life with comfort, not by adding any thing "to our uncertain time, but by taking away "the deſire of immortality. Shall they com-fort themſelves upon ſo wretched a ground, with a little Sophiſtry, and the hope of extin-guiſhing all deſire of immortality? and ſhall not we, by cheriſhing the bleſſed hope of in-joying ſhortly an immortal glory?

* Epicurus in Gaſſend. Syntag.

Others of them have ſpoken magnificently of a certain contempt of this bodily life, and *a not onely not fearing*, but *deſiring to dye*, upon a fixed apprehenſion of the diſtinct, and, purer and immortal nature of the ſoul; and the precon-cieved hope of a conſequent felicity. I ſhall ſet down ſome of their words, added to what have been occaſionally mentioned (amongſt that plentiful variety wherewith one might fill a volume) purpoſely to ſhame the more ter-rene temper of many Chriſtians.

The Soul, (saith one of them *) "is an invisible thing, and is going into another "place, suitable to it self, that is noble, and "pure, and invisible, even into *Hades*, indeed "to the good and wise God, whether also my "Soul shall shortly go if he see good. But "this (he saith in what follows) belongs only to such a Soul as goes out of the body pure, "that draws nothing corporal along with it, "did not willingly communicate with the body in life, but did even fly from it, and gather up it self into it self, always meditating "this one thing.

"A soul so affected, shall it not go to something "like it self, divine, (and what is divine, is immortal and wise) whether, when it comes, "it becomes blessed, free from errour, ignorance, fears, and wild (or enormous) "loves, and all other evils incident to "men.

* Plato in Phædone, *From whom I adjoyn what (to them that understand it) is more elegant in his own language,* ὃν ἴσως ἀγαπασόμενα μάλιστα ἀποθανεῖται ὑπ ἀρ φιλόσοφος ἀλλά τις φιλοσώματος. Ibid. Ἀγεῖαν ἰσόταν.

* Porphyrius, Plotinus Ennead. 7. Lib. 6 (*whom though a just admirer of him would fain have men reckon to have been a Christian, because he writes much against the* Pseudo *Christian*, Gnosticks, *nothing against Christianity, yet it appears not he ever made profession of it.* Ennead. 1. Lib. 7.

* One writing the life of that rare person *Plotinus* sayes, that he seemed, as if he were in some sort ashamed, that he was in body, which (however it would less become a Christian, yet) in one that knew nothing of an *incarnate* Redeemer, it discovered a refined, noble Spirit.

The same person speaks almost the language of the Apostle, concerning his being rapt up into the third heaven, and tells of such an alienation of the soul from the body. "*That when* "*once it finds God* (whom he had before been "speaking of under the name of the τὸ καλὸν "or the beauty) *shining in upon it, it now no* "*longer*

" *longer feels its body, or takes notice of its be-*
" *ing in the body,* but even forgets its own being,
" that it is a man, or a living creature, or any
" thing else whatsoever, for it is not at leisure
" to mind any thing else, nor doth it desire to
" be: Yea, and having sought him out, he im-
" mediately meets it, presenting its self to him.
" It onely views him instead of it self,---and
" would not now change its state for any thing,
" not if one could give it the whole heaven in
" exchange.

" And, else where, discussing, whether life in
" the body be good and desirable yea or no,
" he concludes it to be good, not as it is an
" union of the soul and body; but as it may
" have that vertue annex't to it, by which, what
" is really evil may be kept off. But yet, that
" that death is a greater good. That life in the
" body is in it self evil, but the soul is by *vertue*
" stated in *goodness*; not as enlivening the body,
" with which it is compounded, but as it severs,
" and so joyns it self from it; meaning so, as to
" have as little communion as possible it can
" with it. To which purpose is the expression
of another; " That the soul of an happy man
" so collects and gathers up it self out from all
" things into it self, that it hath as it were, se-
" parated it self from the body, while it is yet
" contained in it---And that it was possest of
" that fortitude, as not to dread its departure
" from it. In his *Manu. Proclus.*

" Another gives this character of a good
" man, that as he liv'd in simplicity, tranqui-
" lity, purity, not being offended at any that

"they believed him not to live ſo, he alſo
"comes to the end of his life, pure, quiet, and
M. Aur. Ant. "*eaſie* * *to be diſſolved*, diſpoſing himſelf, with-
"out any conſtraint to his lot.

"Another is brought in, ſpeaking thus, If
Cato in Cicerone de Senect. "God ſhould grant me to become a Child a-
"gain, to ſend forth my renewed infant-cries
"from my Cradle, and, having even run
"out my race, to begin it again; I ſhould moſt
"earneſtly refuſe it; for what profit hath this
"life? and how much toil?---Yet I do not
"repent that I have lived, becauſe, I
"hope, I have not liv'd in vain. And
"I now go out of this life, not as out of my
"dwelling houſe, but my Inn. O bleſſed day,
"when I ſhall enter into that Council and As-
"ſembly of ſouls, and depart from this rude,
"and diſorderly rout, and crew, &c.

I ſhall adde another (of a not much unlike
* Philo Judæus. ſtrain * and rank) that diſcourſing *who is the Heir of Divine things*, (at being either not an open or
"no conſtant friend to *Chriſtianity*) Saith, he cannot
"be, who is in love with this animal, ſenſitive
"life: but only that pureſt mind, that is inſpired
"from above; that partake of an Heavenly,
"and Divine portion; that onely deſpiſes the
"body, &c. with much more of like import.

Yea, ſo have ſome been tranſported with the *deſire of immortality*, that (being wholly ignorant of the ſin of ſelf-murder) they could not forbear doing violence to themſelves.

Q. Curt. lib. 8. Among the *Indians*, two thouſand years ago, were a ſort of wiſe men, as they were called, that held it a reproach to dye of age, or a diſeaſe,

ſeaſe, and were wont to burn themſelves alive, thinking the flames were polluted, if they came amidſt them dead.

The ſtory of *Cleombrotus* is famous, who hearing *Plato* diſcourſe of the immortality of the ſoul, by the Sea ſide, leapt from him into the Sea, that he might preſently be in that ſtate. And 'tis ſtoried that * *Nero* refuſed to put *Apollonius* to death, though he were very much incenſt againſt him, only upon the apprehenſion he had, that he was very deſirous to dye, becauſe he would not ſo far gratifie him. Cicer. Quæ Tuſcul.

* Scil. Domitianus aliquoties ſic dictus. *Philoſtr. in vit. Apoll. Tyanæi.*

I onely make this improvement of all this, Chriſtian *Principles*, *Rule* do neither hurry, nor miſguide men; but the *end* (as we have it revealed) ſhould much more powerfully, and conſtantly attract us. Nothing is more unſuitable to *Chriſtianity* our *way*, nor to that *bleſſedneſs*, the *end* of it, then a terrene Spirit. They have nothing of the true light, and impreſs of the Goſpel, now; nor are they ever like to attain the Viſion of the bleſſed face of God, and the impreſs of his likeneſs hereafter, that deſire it not above all things; and are not willing to quit all things elſe for it.

And is it not a juſt exprobration of our earthlineſs, and carnality, if meer Philoſophers, and Pagans, ſhall give better proof then we, of a ſpirit erected above the world, and alienated from what is temporary, and terrene? Shall their Gentiliſm outvy our Chriſtianity? Methinks a generous indignation of this reproach ſhould inflame our ſouls, and contribute ſomewhat

what to the refining of them to a better and more Spiritual temper.

Now therefore, O all you that name your selves by that worthy name of *Christians*; that profes the Religion taught by him, that was not of the earth, earthly, but the Lord from heaven; you that are partakers of the heavenly calling. Consider the great Apostle and High-priest of your profession; who only took our flesh, that we might partake of his Spirit; bare our earthly, that we might bare his heavenly Image; descended, that he might cause us to ascend. Seriously bethink your selves of the Scope and end of his *Apostleship* and *Priesthood*. He was *sent* out from God to invite and conduct you to him, to bring you into the Communion of his glory and blessednes. He came upon a Message and Treaty of peace. To discover his Fathers love and win yours. To let you know how kind thoughts the God of love had conceived to you-wards. And that, however you had hated him without cause, and were bent to do so without end; he was not so affected towards you. To settle a friendship and to admit you to the participation of his eternal glory. Yea he came to give an instance, and exemplifie to the world in his own Person how much of heaven he could make to dwell in mortal flesh: how possible he could render it to live in this world, as unrelated to it, How gloriously the divine life could triumph over all the infirmities of frail humanity. And so leave men a certain proof and pledge, to what perfections humane nature should

should be improv'd by his grace and Spirit, in all them that should resign themselves to his conduct, and follow his steps. That heaven and earth were not so far asunder, but he knew how to settle a commerce and intercourse between them. That an heavenly life was *possible* to be transacted here, and *certain* to be gloriously rewarded hereafter.

And having testifi'd these things, he seals the Testimony; and opens the way for the accomplishment of all by his death. Your heavenly *Apostle*, becomes a *Priest*, and a *Sacrifice* at once. That no doubt might remain among men of his sincerity, in what, even dying he ceased not to profess, and avow. And that by his own propitiatory bloud a mutual reconciliation might be wrought between God and you; that your hearts might be won to him, and possest with an ingenuous shame of your ever having been his enemies. And that his displeasure might for ever cease towards you, and be turned into everlasting friendship and love. That eternal redemption being obtained, heaven might be opened to you, and you finally, be received to the glory of God. Your hearts being bent thitherward and made willing to run through whatsoever difficulties of life or death to attain it. Do not think that Christ came into the world, and dyed to procure the pardon of your sins; and so translate you to heaven; while your hearts should still remain cleaving to the earth. He came, and returned to prepare a way for you? and then call, not drag you thither. That by his Precepts,

and

and Promises, and Example and Spirit, he might form and fashion your Souls to that glorious state. And make you willing to abandon all things for it. And low now the God of all grace is calling you by Jesus Christ unto his eternal Glory. Direct then your eyes and hearts to that marke, the Prise of the High calling of God in Christ Jesus. 'Tis ignominious by the common suffrage of the civiliz'd world not to intend the proper business of our Callings. To your Calling to forsake this world, and mind the other, make hast then to quit your selves of your entanglements, of all earthly dispositions and affections. Learn to live in this world as those that are not of it; that expect, every day and wish to leave it whose hearts are gone already.

'Tis dreadful to dye with pain and regret; To be forced out of the Body; To dye a violent death and go away with an unwilling reluctant heart. *The wicked is driven away in his wickedness.* Fain he would stay longer, but cannot. *He hath not power over the Spirit, to retain the Spirit nor hath he power in death.* He must away whether he will or no. And indeed much against his will. So it cannot but be where there is not a previous knowledge and love of a better state, where the Soul understands it not, and is not effectually attempered and framed to it.

O get then the lovely Image of the future glory into your minds, keep it ever before your eyes. Make it familiar to your thoughts. Imprint daily there these words. *I shall behold thy*

*thy face, I ſhall be ſatisfied with thy likeneſs.* And ſee that your ſouls be inrich't with that *righteouſneſs*, Have inwrought into them that holy rectitude, that may diſpoſe them to that bleſſed ſtate. Then will you dye with your own conſent, and go away, not driven, but allur'd, and drawn. You will go, as the redeemed of the Lord, with everlaſting joy upon their heads. As thoſe that know whether you go, even to a ſtate infinitely worthy of your deſires, and choice, and where 'tis beſt for you to be. You will part with your ſouls, not by a forcible ſeparation, but a joyful ſurrender and reſignation. They will diſlodge from this earthly Tabernnacle, rather *as putting it off*, then having it rent and torn away.

Looſen your ſelves from this body by degrees, as we do any thing we would remove from a place where it ſticks faſt. Gather up your ſpirits into themſelves. Teach them to look upon themſelves, as diſtinct thing. Inure them to the thoughts of a diſſolution. Be continually as taking leave. Croſs, and diſprove the common maxime; and let your hearts, which they uſe to ſay, are wont to dye laſt, dye firſt. Prevent death, and be mortifi'd towards every earthly thing beforehand; that death may have nothing to kill but your body. And that you may not die a double death in one hour; and ſuffer the death of your body, and of your love to it, both at once. Much leſs that *this* ſhould ſurvive, to your greater (and even incurable) miſery.

Shake off your Bands and Fetters, the terrene

rene affections, that so closely confine you to the house of your bondage. And lift up your heads in expectation of the approaching Jubilee, the day of your redemption; when you are to go out free, and enter into the glorious liberty of the Sons of God. When you shall serve, and groan, and complain no longer. Let it be your continual song, and the matter of your daily praise; that the time of your happy deliverance is hastening on; that ere long you shall be absent from the body, and present with the Lord. That he hath not doom'd you to an everlasting imprisonment within those clos and clayie walls; wherein you have been so long shut up from the beholding of his sight and glory. In the thoughts of this, while the outward man is sensibly perishing, let the inward revive, and be renewed day by day. "What Prisoner would be sorry to see "the walls of his Prison House (so an Hea- "then speaks) mouldering down, and the "hopes arriving to him of being delivered out "of that darkness that had buried him, of re- "covering his liberty, and injoying the free "air, and light. What Champion inur'd "to hardship, would stick to throw off rotten "rags? & rather expose a naked, placid, free bo- "dy, to naked, placid, free air? The truly "generous soul (to be a little above) ne- "ver leaves the body against its will.

Max. Tyr. Dis. sert. 41.

Rejoyce that it is the gracious pleasure of thy good God, thou shalt not always inhabit a Dungeon, nor lie amid'st so impure and disconsolate darkness; that he will shortly exchange

change thy filthy Garments, for thoſe of Salvation and Praiſe. The end approaches. As you turn over theſe leaves, ſo are your days turned over. And as you are now arrived to the end of this Book, God will ſhortly write *Finis*, to the Book of your Life on Earth; and ſhew you your names written in Heaven, in the Book of that Life which ſhall never end.

*FINIS.*